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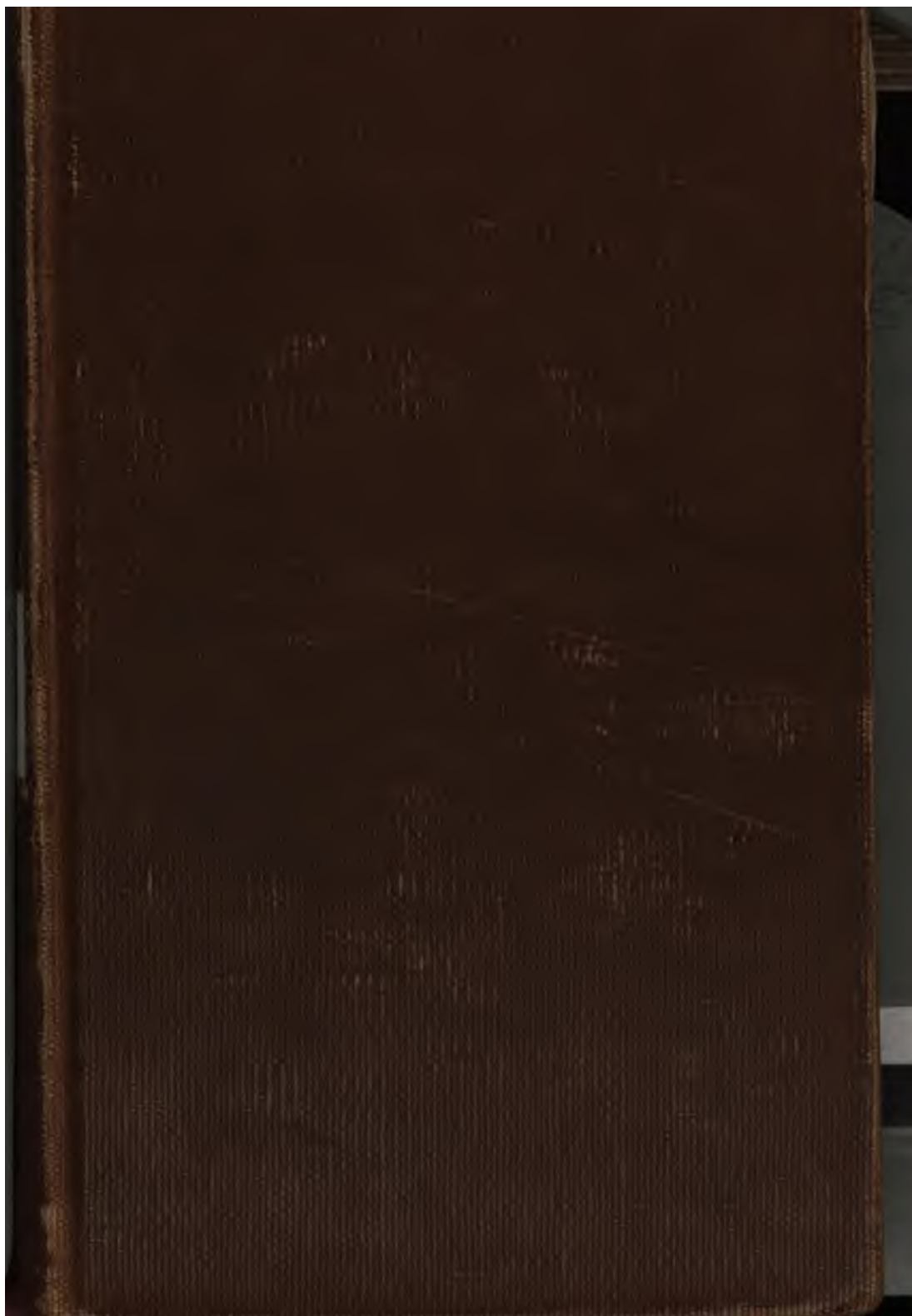
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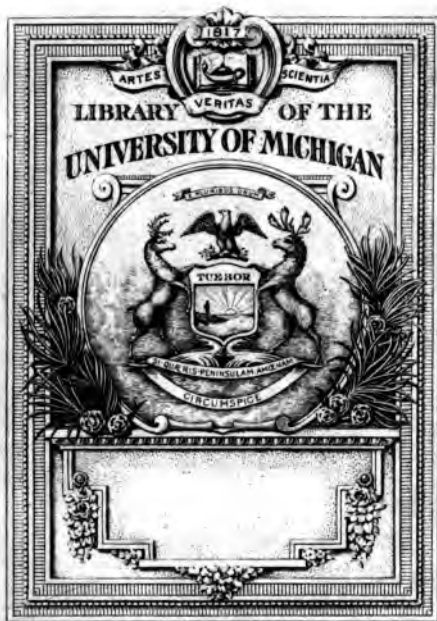




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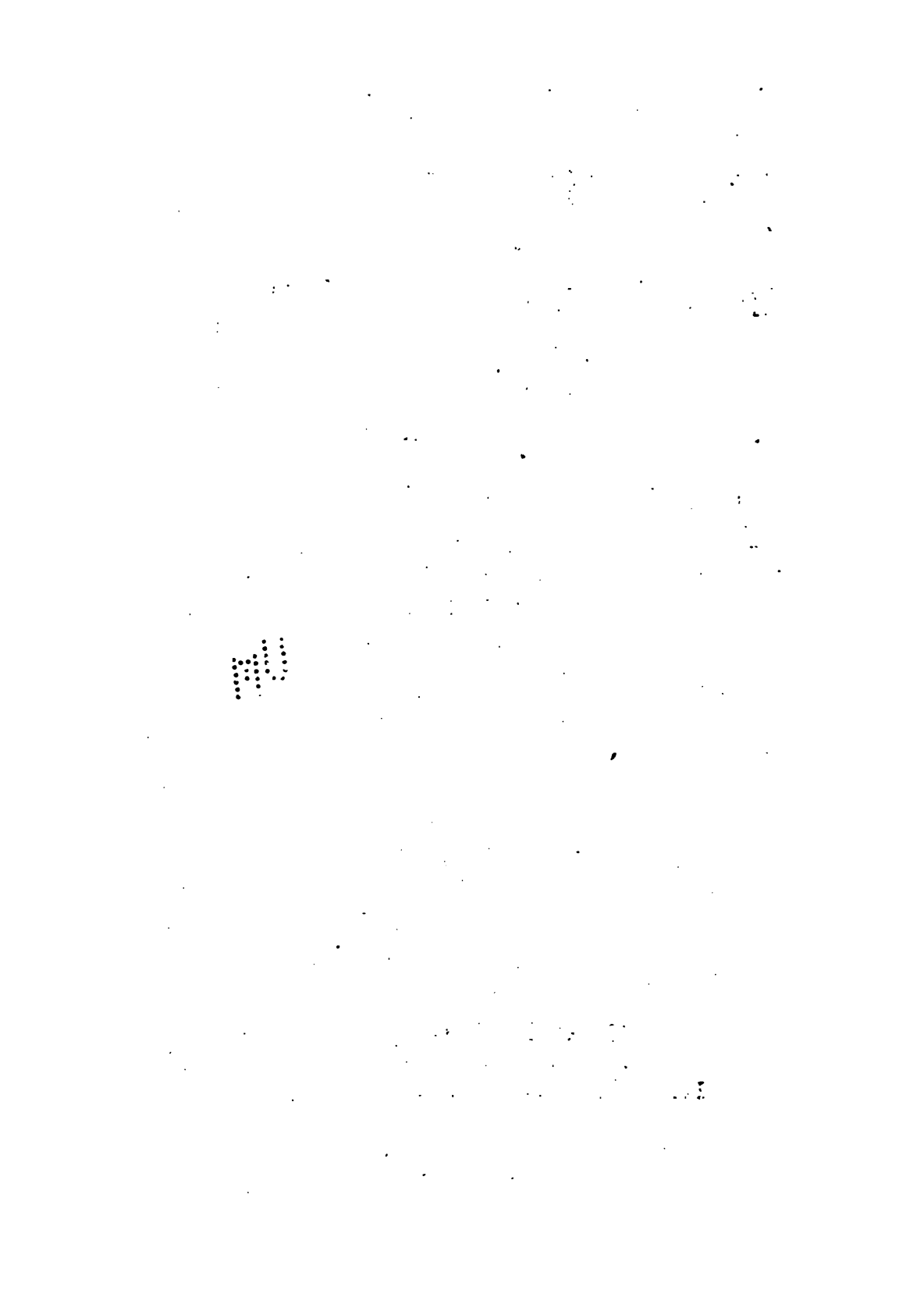
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Plinius Caesariensis Secus. in D. M. Gregor

THE
LETTERS
OF
PLINY the YOUNGER,
With **OBSERVATIONS** on each **LETTER;**
And an **ESSAY** on **PLINY's LIFE,**
ADDRESSED TO
CHARLES LORD BOYLE.
By **JOHN EARL of ORRERY.**
VOLUME I.



L O N D O N,
Printed by *James Bettenham,*
For **PAUL VAILLANT, MDCCLII.**





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LIFE of PLINY,

In a LETTER to

CHARLES. Lord BOYLE.

My DEAR CHARLES,

MY leisure can never be better employed, than towards your improvement ; nor is it more my duty, than inclination, to point out to you every ancient and modern example of untainted virtue, and inviolated goodness. The author, who is now placed before you in our own language, is a most singular instance of that primitive simplicity, that integrity of manners, and that sweetness of disposition, which must render a man amiable to his cotermporaries, and honoured, and admired by

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A

all

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all posterity. He passed the earlier part of his life in sanguinary, suspicious, unsettled times; and he afterwards filled employments of the highest dignity and power. The latter situation was no less dangerous than the former. It was open to all the blasts of envy, rancour, and revenge; yet by the uprightness of his heart, the excellence of his genius, and the exactness of his prudence, joined to that proper humility, which is neither basely servile, nor secretly ambitious, he rode through the storm in great triumph, boldly, prosperously, and unhurt. His most threatening hazards proceeded from his strict friendships, and firm affections to all those, whom he honoured with his esteem, or admitted to his bosom. The sincerity of his nature made his actions ever accompany his professions. He was true to his professions, and pertinacious in his good offices; never to be alarmed by perilous difficulties, never to be wearied by labour, or opposition. Follow him here, my dear CHARLES, with so exact a pace, as not to let him go one step beyond you: be nicely cautious, and considerately scrupulous in the election of those you love: but, when you have made the choice, in which I pray God to direct your judgement, keep firm to it, in opposition to all powers, party, fashion, or temptation.

PLINY is not without his blemishes. The critics determine his style in general to be too concise, and have discovered in him great marks of vanity, and affectation. There is, I confess, some foundation for such censures; his metaphors indeed frequently want uniformity, and are sometimes inconsistent. But his beauties, both in literature, and morals, far outweigh all his defects.

The character of
PLINY.

He was one of the best, and one of the greatest men, that any age has produced; second to none in virtue, equal to most in accomplishments; of high birth by his ancestors, but much more ennobled by himself. In the various stations of private life, he discharged

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discharged every duty with piety, and exactness; he was an affectionate, endearing husband, an unalterable, and a courageous friend; to his servants, a tender and careful master; to his associates, an easy, and often a facetious companion: grave without severity, witty without ill nature, open without imprudence; he was, my CHARLES, what I wish you may be, a splendid original, whom few can copy; but whom all ought to imitate. And if, on the other hand, we examine him in his public character, as a statesman, and as first minister to TRAJAN, he will be acknowledged one of those rare spirits, who seem allotted by heaven, as blessings upon earth. The due course, and impartial administration of the law, the glory of the commonwealth, the interest, and prosperity of the emperor, were the moving springs to all his actions, and the sole end of his most secret designs: his views neither centered in himself, nor in his own family; they were dilated universally, and took in the whole. He was equally the faithful servant of the empire, of the people, and of the prince. He was indefatigable in business, and immovable in patriotism: threats could not alarm him; bribes could not allure him. Thus, above fear, and above temptation, he became a shield to his fellow citizens, an ornament to the republic, and a support to the emperor. He was an elegant scholar, an excellent philosopher, and a powerful orator, the patron and example of those arts and sciences, which he cultivated and admired. His abilities were only to be exceeded by his candour, and integrity; so that, among the most celebrated names of antiquity, scarce any character will be found adequate to PLINY. He was not absolutely void of resentment, which perhaps he has carried too far in the case of MARCUS AQUILIUS REGULUS, for whose misfortune, in the death of an only son, he seems to have less pity, than he discovers upon any other occasion.

The many fortunate circumstances, which attended PLINY from his birth, and were interspersed in his life, are worth your observation. The exact time when his father died, is not, as I remember, mentioned by any historian; nor is any character given of him, except that he was the immediate ancestor of so illustrious a son, who was born, as you will find, by several of his epistles, at *Comum*; and was placed very early under the tuition of his mother's brother, PLINY the natural historian. His uncle was destroyed by too curious, and too imprudent an approach to *Vesuvius* ^a. The nephew was left behind at *Misenum*, reserved, as it were, by providence, for purposes of future benefit to mankind. He was eighteen years old when his uncle died ^b. But we must not omit a surprising instance of his maturity in learning, which appeared at an æra, when in other youths scarce the dawning of knowledge is perceptible. At the age of fourteen he had made so happy a progress, and was so perfect a master of the Greek tongue, that he composed a tragedy in that language. He thus modestly mentions it in one of his letters. *Quinetiam^c quatuordecim natus annos Græcam tragediam scripsi. Qualem? inquis. Nescio. Tragedia vocabatur.* The work itself is lost, and perhaps, if extant, could be admired only as the offspring of a forward wit, and lively imagination. Judgement, and reason, those later offsprings of application, and experience, are to be ripened only by age, labour, and assiduity.

Little mention of PLINY's father.

PLINY was eighteen years old when his uncle died.

PLINY was twice married.

PLINY had two wives: the character, name, and person of his first wife are buried with her; we have not even any footsteps of her rank, or fortune: her mother was POMPEIA CELERINA.

The name of his second wife was CALPURNIA. She was educated by her aunt HISPULLA, and was endowed with many valuable qualities, and many high

^a Book 6. Ep. 16.

^b Ibid. Ep. 20.

^c Book 7. Ep. 4. accom-

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accomplishments *. She had an entire affection for her husband. His happiness, his prosperity, and his reputation, were the objects of her thoughts and wishes : by PLINY's letters to her we may judge of the mutual tenderness between them.

There constant love with equal ardor glows,
Nor languid ebbs, nor yet tumultuous flows ;
With faith unalter'd, resolutely just,
No sport of passion, and no slave of lust :
Such is the state the blest enjoy above,
The purest reason, join'd to purest love.

You will find, CHARLES, that PLINY had several ^{PLINY'S} country houses : his Tuscan villa and *Laurentinum* are ^{country} described in two very long and laborious letters, that ^{houses.} seem not to give so clear an idea of the houses themselves, as of his particular affection to them. I imagine you will be delighted with a little garden apartment adjoining to his gallery, and built by himself. He mentions it with ecstasy, in the seventeenth epistle of the second book. And he tells us, that he constantly lodged in this apartment, during the noisy festivals of SATURN, and at once found himself not only enclosed in sweetness, and solitude, but perfectly defended from all kinds of interruption. DOCTOR SHAW, in his travels through the *Levant* and *Barbary*, and in his description of the houses there, takes notice, that they have imitated the eastern manner, by building a private set of apartments, which seem rather annexed, than properly belonging to the rest of the house. The little chamber designed by the *Sbunamite* for ELISHA, where he retired at his pleasure, without breaking in

* See Book 4. Ep. 19.

† 2d of Kings, chap. iv. v. 10. Let us make him a little chamber, I pray thee, with walls ; and let us set him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick, that he may turn in thither when he cometh to us.

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upon the private affairs of the family, and without being interrupted in his own devotions, may be conjectured to be one of these separate buildings : As may also the summer ^a parlour of EGLON, where he was slain by EHUD. The ^b chamber over the gate, to which DAVID withdrew, after the death of his son ABSALOM, seems to have been a structure very parallel to those already mentioned : and I must farther observe to you, that this place of retirement is distinguished by a peculiar word in the Hebrew, which answers the Ὑπερῶν of the Greeks, and which Doctor SHAW says, notwithstanding the seeming etymology, is not appropriated only to one high chamber, but to a private apartment of this nature : ὑπερῶν *pro* ὑπερώϊον *Atticè dicitur, ab* ὑπὲρ *et* ὄϊον *quod* *senbriam significat et extremitatem* : and in this sense the word is often used by the classic writers. The ὑπερῶν ^c, where MERCURY carried on his amours, and where ^d PENELOPE and the young virgins kept themselves at a distance from the sollicitations of their woers, were probably edifices detached from the palace of ULYSSES : and are so far answerable, as to bear a strong resemblance to PLINY's description of his favorite *Diata*. Doctor SHAW assures us, that the eastern apartments of privacy often had a door of communication to a gallery ; joined, I presume, in the same manner as the *Diata* to PLINY's *Cryptoporticus*.

The Roman luxury appeared no where greater, or more extensive, than in their public buildings, particularly in their *Palestra*, the accounts of which are amazing. It will be difficult to give you more than a general imperfect view of them, because the size,

^a Judges iii. 20 and 25.

^b 2d of Samuel, xviii. 33.

^c HOMER, II. II. l. 184.

Αὐτίκα δ' εἰς ὑπερῶν ἀνάβας, περιέξατο λάβρη
Ἑρμείας ἀνάκητα.

^d HOMER Odyss. O. l. 515, 516.

ὃ μὲν γὰρ τι θαμὰ μνηστῆρ' ἐν οἴκῳ
φαίνεται, ἀλλ' ἀπο τῶν ὑπερῶν ἰσὺν ὑφαίνει.

order,

order, and number of their divisions, varied according to the fancy, or the abilities of the builder; and the particular customs of the country, wherein they were built: However, such observations as have occurred to me in any narrow sphere of reading, from those authors, who have treated upon the subject, I here dedicate to your perusal, as they will be of some use to you. The form and description of the several parts of the Roman *Palæstra* were different from the Grecian, as described by Vitruvius; and were more magnificent. The whole area was very large, and was inclosed in an oblong square, which may be considered as the external walls of the entire building.

On the south prospect the *theatridium*, formed like a small theatre, took up one third of that side; and was a principal part of the edifice. This had an open large entry, and magnificent pillars on each side, through which a passage led into the *palæstra*.

On each side of the *theatridium* were placed the *ekkykleia*, the *ephebeum*, the *coritæum*, and the *conylærium*, like wings to it; and in the angle on each side was situated the *sphaisterium*, of a round form, and intended for various sorts of exercises, but especially ball.

A large *platea*, immediately within the external wall, was continued through the whole circumference of the *palæstra*, in which persons not only walked, but used promiscuously exercises of different kinds.

This *platea*, or street, had a passage into two square *peristyles* at each side of the *theatridium*, and another, which led directly into the center of the *palæstra*, where were placed the *balnea*, *xystræ*, et cætera.

On the opposite northern side there was another magnificent entry, which some antiquaries think the chief and principal entry of the whole building. From hence, through walks of platan trees, different passages led to the public swimming place, the galleries,

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bathing apartments, and the open and covered places of exercise.

At each side of this northern entry there were different *exbedrae*, with seats placed in a semicircular manner, where the philosophers met to perform their learned disputations, as a situation more remote from the other exercises, and on many accounts the most agreeable; more shaded with platans, and more free from any noise, except the grateful murmur of fountains, emptying themselves into a large pond for swimming, which, like the warm bath, had several apartments, and members peculiar to it.

It is certain, that the chief elegance and beauty of the *balnea*, the *palestra* were the rising fabrics of the *balnea*; the structure of which, and the contrivances, to supply such a quantity of water with different degrees of heat, were particularly curious.

The anterior part was divided into two distinct uniform orders of baths. One at the right, the other at the left side of the *hypocaustum**; which was situated in the middle, and each order consisted of four separate chambers, on either side of the *hypocaustum*: they were called the *Laconicum*, *tepidarium*, *calidarium*, and *frigidarium*. All these chambers had, by passages, a communication with each other.

Different apartments for men and women. It is more than probable, from the best accounts, that this double order of bathing-apartments was designed for the separate uses of men and women. HERODOTUS, a very ancient writer, takes notice in this sense of baths peculiar to women.

Μηδὲ γυναῖκας λικρῶ χροῖα Φαιδύνεσθαι
Ἄνιγα.

Nec vir corpus oblectet lavando cum muliere.

* So called from the furnace underneath.

This

This distinction was kept up during the early and virtuous times of the Romans: but when vice and debauchery prevailed, promiscuous bathing was practised without shame, or punishment; till at last the custom became so scandalous; that a particular law was enacted against it, with the penalty of divorce, and loss of fortune.

The *hypocaustum* was a large furnace, in which the fire was kept, that gave warmth to the water and bathing rooms. Over the *hypocaustum* were placed three different large vaulted vessels, called *miliaria* ^a; perhaps from their size, as containing such an immense quantity of water, *millions of quarts*.

These vessels were situated in such a manner, that the water was communicated through them by winding tubes: and they were distinguished by the same names with the three principal bathing apartments; *vas frigidarium, vas tepidarium, vas calidarium*.

The first received the cold water from the common reservoir, which was communicated to the next by the serpentine tubes; and that again was communicated to the last, and inferior, (*vas calidarium*) by tubes, which were yet more serpentine, that the water might, in a longer circulation round the *calidarium*, receive greater degrees of heat. By these means, whatever quantity was discharged from the *vas calidarium*, was immediately supplied from the *tepidarium*, and this from the *vas frigidarium*, which was filled by the common reservoir. Thus, without any expence of labour, they were kept constantly full. There were several brass tubes, which conveyed these waters to various apartments; and there were also subterraneous passages formed most artfully with brick, in which long channels, like fews, were hollowed:

^a See SENECA, CATO, and PALLADIUS, who all mention the *miliaria*.

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these dispersed the dry hot vapour to the *apodyterium*, *calidarium*, and *Laconicum*. SENECA^a takes notice of such passages distributing the warm vapour in different degrees, to different parts: and in a Roman浴室 found at *Wroxeter* in *Shropshire*, the form of these bricks, and the manner of laying them, is exactly described in the Philosophical Transactions. CAMDEN mentions an *hypocaustum*, with this structure, discovered in *Flinshire*; and the author^d of the additions to CAMDEN tells us, there was another discovered at *Caerbean* in *Carnarvonshire*.

There were particular persons appointed to take care of the fire, called *fornacatores*; in kindling which, they chiefly made use of wood, and other combustible materials formed into balls, and covered with pitch. STATIUS particularly alludes to these, and the conveyance of the vapour throughout the several chambers and apartments, in his description of the *Herulcan baths*;

Crepantes

*Auditura pilas, ubi languidus ignis inerrat
Ædibus, et tenuem voluunt hypocausta vaporem.*

The Laconicum.

The *Laconicum* was a small close vaulted chamber, situated at the first turning from the *hypocaustum*, on which account the heat there was excessive. It was seldom used by those, who performed the exercises of the *palestra*: but the lazy, the infirm, and the debauched, generally supplied the want of exercise, by sweating in the *Laconicum*. COLUMELLA, blaming the luxurious life of citizens, says, *mox deinde, ut apti veniamus ad ganeas, quotidianam cruditatem Laconicis excoquimus, et exacto sudore sitim quarimus*. The

^a See SENECA. Nat. Quæst. Lib. 3. cap. 24.

^b See Abridgment of Philosophical Transactions, Vol. 5. part 2. page 61.

^c *Britannia*, p. 638.

^d Mr. LHWGD.

^e *Sylvarum*, lib. 1.

^f *De Re rustica, præfat.*

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3

Lacedæmonians, as * PLUTARCH observes, first invented the *Laconicum*, and from them it received the name : they generally went smoaking with heat out of that chamber directly into the cold bath ; being unwilling to relax their vessels with warm bathing, and fond of accustoming their constitutions to the greatest extremes of heat and cold, as appears from MARTIAL †.

*Ritus si placeant tibi Laconum,
Contentus potes arido vapore,
Cruda Virgine, Martiaque mergi.*

This chamber is called by the Greeks *υπεραιθρον* : by the Romans it is generally called *cella calida*, or *Laconicum* ; by SENECA, *sudatorium* ; by CICERO, *assa* ; by VITRUVIUS, *calidarium*. It was never wanting in the private baths. * CICERO takes particular notice of it in a letter to his brother QUINTUS, where he says, he has removed it to another corner of the *apodyterium*, because the heat was inconvenient to a bed-chamber immediately over it. From hence it is evident, that this was always distinct from the bathing room ; although the different names given to it have rendered the many accounts of the *Laconicum* perplexed, and unintelligible.

The *tepidarium*, in the public and private baths, ^{The tepidarium.} was the most magnificent part of the whole. It was moderately warmed by the *hypocaustum*, and was always so situated, as to receive all the influence of the sun. In this place, such persons, who had gone through the usual exercises, were rubbed down with *strigiles*, or *scrapers*, before they were anointed for bathing. The *strigiles* were made either of ivory or ^{The strigil metal :} metal : the common sort, kept in the public baths,

* In vita ALCIBIADIS,
‡ Lib. 3. Ep. 1.

† Lib. 6. Epig. 42.

were

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were of iron. But people of rank had generally their own *strigiles*, as appears from this line in ^a PERSIUS.

I, puer, et strigiles Crispini ad balnea defer.

And these were often of silver, and sometimes of gold. They scraped the skin with so much force, that by the frequent use of them, AUGUSTUS ^b had several callous excrescences on his breast and belly. But to temper the roughness of these instruments, they dipped them, before they used them, in oil.

The calidarium.

The *calidarium* was a principal part of the *balnea*; large, and placed so as to receive all the advantages both of light and heat from the sun. The great bathing vessel was called by the Greeks *λατρόν*, by the Latins *lavacrum*, and *labrum*. It was capable of containing many people: the margin of the *lavacrum* was so broad, that they could sit upon it. In the public baths they were rubbed down with sponges, called also *strigiles*; but, in the private baths, their bodies were generally cleaned, (before they anointed) with wash-balls, the principal ingredient of which was the *nitrum*, or *apbronitrum* of the ancients; among whom, on the same account, it was in great esteem, and use. Hence ^c JEREMIAH says, *though thou wash thee with nitre, and take thee much soap, yet thine iniquity is marked before me, saith the LORD GOD.* And SUSANNAH, before she bathed, directed her maids to bring oil, and washing balls. The nitre of the ancients, which was found chiefly in *Ægypt*, had one remarkable property in it, which the modern nitre has not; it constantly made an effervescence, when mixed with acids: which explains a very beautiful passage in *Proverbs*, where ^d SOLOMON compares a man, who singeth songs with a heavy and afflicted

^a Satyr. 5. v. 126.

^b Vide SÆTON. in vita AUG. cap. 80.

^c Chap. ii. v. 22.

^d Prov. chap. xxv. v. 20.

heart,

heart, to a mixture of nitre and vinegar; a similitude, that gives us a strong image of something particularly cold and sharp, although attended with a seeming warmth and a lively ebullition.

The public baths were warmed to a certain degree for all persons; and by the ringing of a bell, notice was given, at a fixed hour, to those, who had exercised, to prepare for bathing; otherwise they were forced to use cold water only.

*Redde pilam, sonat æs thermarum; ludere pergis?
Virgine vis solâ lotus abire domum^a?*

And as the baths were supported at a common expence, the price fixed for bathing was only a farthing, which was constantly paid to the attendant of the baths. On this account, HORACE, with great humour, ridicules the pride of a Stoic philosopher, and tells the imaginary monarch, that his majesty is but one of the crowd, who are obliged to pay their farthing.

*Dum tu quadrante lavatum
Rex ibis^b.*

The *frigidarium*, according to VITRUVIUS, and some other authors, seems to be a distinct chamber for cold bathing. In all the private, and most of the public baths, it was generally built next the *calidarium*; from whence there was a passage to it. But in some of the public Roman *balnea*, and particularly in those of DIOCLETIAN, there were many additional apartments, and conveniencies, unknown to the Grecians, and not used in their private baths. Among these was a large *cryptoporticus*, with spacious open windows, situated and contrived in such a man-

^a MARTIAL, Lib. 14. Epig. 163. ^b Satyr. 3. Lib. 1. l. 137.

ner, as to be fanned with a constant and quick succession of air, which BACCHIUS, in his account *de iberinis veterum*, describes as the *frigidarium*, because it was *locus ventis perflatus fenestris amplis*. But the true *frigidarium*, although several writers have treated it in a confused manner, was the cold bathing chamber. The vessel, or place, in which they bathed, was called *frigida lavatio*, and by PLINY, in the seventeenth epistle of his second book, *baptisterium*.

The antiquity of warm baths is evident from several passages of the antients: they are mentioned among the most early customs of the Egyptians. PLATO, in his description of the *Atlantic* island, tells us, that the inhabitants there had public and private baths, finished and adorned most exactly. HOMER often mentions *λοετρά θερμά* warm bathing; and he makes ULYSSES give it a place among music, dress, and the most charming entertainments of life.

Αἰεὶ δ' ἡμῖν δαΐς τε Φίλη, κίθαρίς τε, χοροὶ τε,
 εἴματα τ' ἐξημοιβὰ, λοετρά τε θερμά, καὶ εὐναί^a.

To dress, to dance, to sing, our sole delight,
 The feast or bath by day, and love by night^b.

PINDAR mentions *θερμά νυμφῶν λυτρά*, *calida nuptiarum balnea*; and PISANDER observes, that MINERVA prepared a bath for HERCULES, to refresh him after his labour.

Although these accounts are fabulous and uncertain, yet they prove the antiquity, and the use of warm baths; which the Syrians, Medes, Persians, Grecians, and at last the Romans, successively received from each other. The Persians in particular, who were industrious in improving all the arts of luxury, adorned their baths, and made them more

^a Odyss. 9. γ. 248.

^b POPE, Od. Book 8. l. 285.

useful: and elegant than they had ever been before. And PLUTARCH observes, that ALEXANDER was greatly surprized with the baths of DARIUS.

The Romans borrowed their first models of baths from the Grecians: The necessity of bathing was naturally occasioned by the exercises, to which the Roman youth were early accustomed.

*ante urbem pueri, et primævo flore juventus,
Exercetur equis, domitantque in pulvere currus:
Aut acres tendunt arcus, aut lensa facertis
Spicula contorquent, cursaque ibique læcessunt*.*

Before the city, boys, and blooming youth,
With rapid chariots, exercise their strength,
And tame their horses in the dusty field;
Or bend their twanging bows, and with strong arms
Launch the tough javelin, with the dart and shaft
Contending.

The senate first appointed the *campus Martius* for the use of bathing, as being situated near the *Tyber*. VALENTINUS gives us a very particular account of it. *As ignorantia non solum ab hoste, sed etiam ab ipsis aquis discrimen incurrit: ideoque Romani veteres, quos tot bella, et continuata pericula, ad omnem rei militaris eruditionem, campum Martium vicinam Tyberi delegerant; in qua juvenus, post exercitium armorum, sudorem puberemque dilueret, ac lassitudinem cursus naturæ labore deponeret.*

But as the muddy waters of the *Tyber* were unfit for that use, the Romans erected other bathing places, which exceeded any Grecian plans, in all the circumstances of convenience, splendor, and even Asiatic delicacy.

* VALENTINUS, *Essid. Lib. 7. y. 162.*

7. y. 205.

Lib. 1. cap. 10.

b TRAPP. *Æt.*

The *gymnasia*. The *gymnasia* of the Grecians were of greater extent, than the *palestra* of the Romans. We learn from what SOLON says in ^a *Lucian*, that these places of exercise owed their original to the Greeks. The first part in the *gymnasia* was the porticus, or gallery, which had several distinct apartments, where the philosophers, rhetoricians, and mathematicians disputed and read lectures. PAUSANIAS and SUIDAS mention two at *Athens*; one called *ἀκαδημία*, where PLATO taught, and another called *λυκείον*, where ARISTOTLE gave his lectures. These apartments were at no great distance from the place of exercise, as is evident from the plan of HIERONYMUS MERCURIALIS ^b, and from the proverb, *discum, quam philosophiam audire malunt*.

The *ephebeum*, or second part. The second part was the *ephebeum*, where they met to agree about the manner of their exercise, and to settle the prize, for which they contended.

The *coriceum*, or third part. The third part was the *coriceum*, which seems to mark out the place of undressing for those, who either bathed, or exercised, called by the Greeks *ἀποδυτήριον*. The commentators on VITRUVIUS probably mistake, when they imagine this place to have been a part of the *gymnasia*, destined for the particular exercise of ball, called *corycus*. PLINY takes notice of the *apodyterium* in his Tuscan villa; and as VITRUVIUS mentions no apartments for undressing, which could scarce be wanting either in the public or private baths, it is no unreasonable surmise, to suppose, that the *coriceum* of VITRUVIUS was adapted for that necessary purpose.

The *elæothesium*, or fourth part. The fourth part was the *elæothesium*, by the Greeks called *ἀλειπητήριον*, by PLINY, *unctuarium*, where those,

^a Ἀναχάρσσις, Ἡ περὶ γυμνασίων.

^b A physician, who has written *de re gymnasticâ*. He was born at *Forli* in *Italy*, 1530, and died there 1596. His works, exclusive of those parts, which relate to physic, contain remarkable passages and curious observations.

who

who exercised, or bathed, were anointed before they went to the bath, or begun their exercise, and after they returned from it. The antiquity of this custom appears from HOMER ;

Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ λῶσιν τε, καὶ ἔχρισεν λίπ' ἐλαίῳ ^a.

Sweet POLYCASTE took the pleasing toil,
To bath the prince, and pour the fragrant oil ^b.

This was in preparation of the journey intended by TELEMACHUS: and in another part of the Odyſſey we have these lines ;

Τόφρα δὲ Λαίρτην μεγάλητορα ᾧ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ
'Αμφίπολος Σικελῆ λῶσεν καὶ χρίσεν ἐλαίῳ ^c.

The hoary king his old Sicilian maid
Perfum'd and wash'd ^d.

There is a remarkable passage in STOBÆUS, which may be inserted on this occasion. That author says, the servants of ARCHIMEDES were accustomed at bathing-times to take him by force from the table, where he drew mathematical figures, with such a fixed attention, that he continued to draw them on his anointed body, not knowing where he was, while his servants were pouring ointments upon him, and preparing him for the bath.

The oils, which the ancients made use of after bath-^{The oils.}ing, were more pure and valuable, than those used before: and the people were so fond of these ointments, that the most popular gift, any great man could bestow, was a present of oil to the public baths.

^a HOMER Odyſſ. lib. 3. ῥ. 466.

^c HOMER Odyſſ. lib. 24. ῥ. 364.

ῥ. 425.

^b PORE, book 3. ῥ. 594.

^d PORE, book 24.

AN ESSAY on the

There were various sorts of ointments used for the purposes already mentioned, of all which the elder PLINY, in the thirteenth book of his natural history; gives a full account: but the finest and most fragrant was brought from *Syria*, and made of the leaves of an aromatic plant, which grows in *India*, and is called *nardum*, from the pointed figure of its leaves. This ointment is also called *unguentum spicatum*, and sometimes *foliatum*; in which sense we are to take the following expression of JUVENAL;

Mæchis foliata parantur ^a.

It was not only used after bathing, but sometimes at the public entertainments.

*Assyriâque nardo
Potamus uncti.*

says HORACE, in the eleventh ode of the second book. With this particular sort of ointment CHRIST was anointed in ^b *Bethany*, in the house of SIMON the leper, as he sat at meat. It had been kept in a box of alabaster; which is agreeable to what HORACE says to VIRGIL, when he invites him to supper, and desires him to bring some of that valuable ointment with him;

*Nardo vina merebere,
Nardi parvus onyx eliciet cadum* ^c.

The wrestlers, after anointing, by mutual agreement, oftentimes sprinkled dust upon their bodies, before the combat, to give each other a more firm hold of his adversary: the glory therefore was

^a Satir. 6. l. 464.

^b St. MARK, ch. xiv. v. 5.

^c Ode 12. lib. 4. v. 16.

esteemed greater to conquer an adversary, who was anointed without powder, because it was more difficult to grasp him. * PLINY the elder celebrates DI-
OXIPPUS as a combatant, who disdained to take the advantage of the *pulvis*. Such wrestlers were from thence said to have conquered *accorsi*. It is according to this interpretation, that the following passage in HORACE, mistaken by most, if not all, of the commentators, is to be understood :

*Quis circum pagos, et circum compita pugnae,
Magna coronari contemnat Olympia, cui spes,
Cui fit conditio dulcis sine pulvere palmae* ^b ?

The fifth part of the *gymnasia* was the *conisterium*, The conisterium, or fifth part of the gymnasia. where the powder was kept, and where the wrestlers were anointed. There were various sorts of these powders brought from various countries. But two kinds were more particularly esteemed, the one called *Puteolanus*, I suppose from *Puteoli*, of which SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS speaks in this line,

Namque Dicarcbæe translatus pulvis arenae ^c.

The other came from *Ægypt*, which SUTTONIUS, in the life of NERO, says, was brought to Rome, amongst the other extravagancies of that emperor : and PLINY the elder tells us, that PATROBIUS ^d, the freedman of NERO, had yearly conveyed to him from the Nile a fine sand, not much different from the sand of *Puteoli*, which contributed to determine the victory of the *Athleta* with greater ease and quickness. He adds farther, that the same sort of sand was carried with other military utensils, by LEONATUS,

^a Book 35. chap. 11.
2. §. 59.

^b Ep. 1. lib. 1. §. 49.

^d Lib. 35. cap. 13.

^c Carmen

An ESSAY on the

CRASSUS, and MELEAGER, generals of ALEXANDER the great, wherever they marched.

The sixth part of the gymnasia, called the *palæstra*.

The sixth part was the large open space, where they wrestled, jumped, lifted weights, and practised various feats of strength and activity. This place was more particularly distinguished with the title of *palæstra*; and from hence all places of exercise, where no regular *gymnasium* was erected, are in an unconfined sense called by that name. Thus the verse in VIRGIL has a signification to that purpose;

Pars in gramineis exercent membra palæstris *.

“ On grassy theatres some exercise their limbs.”

And *Geta*, in TERENCE'S *Phormio*, upon seeing PHÆDRIA coming from the house of his mistress, says sneeringly,

Eccum ab suâ palestrâ exit foras †.

The *sphæristerium*, or seventh part of the gymnasia.

The seventh part of the *gymnasia* was the *sphæristerium*. As the *sphæristerium* is particularly mentioned by PLINY in his description of his two villas, and as the use of it is not always understood, some authors mistaking it for a bowling-green, which was a kind of exercise not practised, as I can recollect, by the Romans; it may not be improper to attempt at a full explanation of this part of the *palæstra*. Where PLINY mentions his *sphæristerium* in the sixth epistle of the fifth book, he represents it, as having several circular divisions, in which different kind of exercises were performed: *Apodyterio superpositum est sphæristerium, quod plura genera exercitationis pluresque circulos capit*. Of these the general and favorite exercise among the Greeks and Romans, before they

* Æneid. 6. v. 642.

† Act 3. Scene 1.

bathed,

bathed, was the ball. ^a PLINY the naturalist ascribes the invention of this play to ΠΥΘΗΣ. There were four sorts of balls, which the Grecians describe, μεγάλη σφαῖρα, μικρά σφαῖρα, κενή σφαῖρα, ἢ κώρυκος. The size and structure of the balls were not only different; but the manner and degree of the exercise varied, according to the several ages, strength, and constitution of the players. The Romans had four sorts of balls, that were again in many respects different from those of the Grecians. They were called, *follis*, *trigonalis*, *paganica*, and *barpastum*.

The *follis* was a ball made of leather, and filled ^{The follis.} with wind. There were two sorts, one of a large, the other of a small size. The former was called *follis pugillaris*. The persons, who played, had large ^b brassetts fixed upon their arms, with which they received, and repelled the ball. ^c PROPERTIUS takes notice of this, where he says,

Cum pila veloci fallit per brachia jactu.

A small force was capable to give great velocity to this ball, which insensibly encouraged the players in continuing an exercise, that from the constant motion which it occasioned, was attended with much fatigue. HORACE speaks of it in that light, where he says,

Molliter austerum studio fallente laborem ^d.

The small ball was received, and repelled by the hand, without brassetts: thus PLAUTUS,

^a Lib. 7. cap. 56.

^b A brasset is a wooden cuff, or

bracer, worn for this particular play of ball.

^c Lib. 3. el.

14. l. 5.

^d HORAT. sat. 2. lib. 2. l. 12.

*Extemplo berce ego te follem pugilatorium
Faciam, et pendentem incurfabo pugnīs, perjurissime!*

“ I will bounce you into the air with my fist,
“ like a tennis ball, and keep you there, you
“ villain !”

But the exercise of this little ball, called by some authors ^b *folliculus*, was appropriated as a milder exercise, than the *follis magnus*, and more adapted to young boys, valetudinarians, and old men. In an epigram of MARTIAL, it is introduced to this purpose :

*Ite procul, juvenes : mitis mihi convenit ætas ;
Folle decet pueros ludere, folle senes .*

Some writers have imagined, that the *μεγάλη σφαῖρα*, or *pila magna* of the Grecians, was the same with the *follis* of the Romans. But they were very different ; for those, who played at the *μεγάλη σφαῖρα*, held their hands higher than their heads ; and the play itself was always regarded as a most violent exercise. Other authors have supposed, with less reason, that the *follis* was the same with the *κώρυκος*, but the latter was filled with bran, and the former only with wind. The *corycus* was suspended by a string from a fixed point in the roof ; but the *follis* was moved through the air from one player to another.

The *pila triangularis*.

The second part of ball was the *pila triangularis*, so called from the triangular position of the persons, who played. It was a small ball, and both hands were engaged in the exercise. The great art was to

^a *RUDENS*, act 3. scene 4.

^b Particularly by *SUETONIUS*, in his life of *AUGUSTUS*, cap. 83. *ad pilam primo, folliculumque transtulit.*

^c *Lib. 14. epig. 47.*

keep it from falling. MARTIAL commends POLYBIUS for being so expert in recovering and returning this ball with his left hand.

*Sic palmam tibi de trigone nullo
Uncta det favor arbiter coronæ,
Nec laudet Polybî magis sinistras *.*

And the same poet, in another place says,

Capitabit tepidum dextrâ, levaque trigonem †.

The third sort was the *pila paganica*; so called, The pila paganica. because it was the common exercise of the villages. The ball was generally filled with feathers, and was larger and heavier than the *trigonalis*; but not so equally firm; which rendered it, according to the epigrammatist just now quoted, more difficult to manage;

*Hæc quæ difficilis turget paganica pluma
Folle minus laxa est, et minus arcta pila †.*

The fourth part was the *harpastum*, which is obscurely explained by most authors; but it seems not unlike the modern play of *goff*. The harpastum. The contending persons on each side endeavoured to drive it to the goal. It was a very violent exercise, fit only for the strongest and most robust men. On this account MARTIAL, when he condemns PHILÆNIS for her masculine behaviour, mentions, as the strongest instance of it,

Harpasto quoque subligata ludit †.

Any exercise at ball was reckoned indecent in the

* Lib. 7. epig. 71.
† Lib. 7. epig. 45.

† Lib. 12. epig. 84.
† Lib. 7. epig. 66.

* Lib.

women ; but the *Harpastum* more so than any other.

The eighth part of the gymnasia. The area of the peristylum.

Now let us return to the eighth part of the *gymnasia*, which was the *area* of the *peristylum*, and the opening passages between the galleries and walls. These were designed to give light to the other parts, and were made use of for walking, and common exercise.

The ninth part, the *xyfti*, and the *xyfta*.

The ninth part was the *xyfti* and *xyfta* ; between which the Greeks and Romans made a great difference : The *xyfti* are the *cryptoporticus*, or covered galleries, where the *athletæ*, in the severity of winter, practised their exercises, but never contended in that place for the prize.

The *xyfta* were the *subdiales ambulationes*, open walks, where, in the winter in mild weather, and in the summer, when the heat of the sun was not too violent, they quitted the *xyfti*, and exercised or walked. These, according to VITRUVIUS, were called by the Greeks *περιδρομίδες*, of which there were two sorts ; one open, the other planted with the plane-tree, to give a shade, and make them more agreeable. PLINY the elder takes notice of them, where he observes, that the platans were much celebrated at *Athens*, for making their walks in the academy gloomy and beautiful : and PLINY the younger speaks of them with more than usual pleasure.

The tenth part of the gymnasia.

The tenth part of the *gymnasia* was the baths, of which I have already endeavoured to give you as full, and as clear a description, as I could gather and digest, from the various, and sometimes incongruous accounts of different authors. These jarring materials arise probably from the various designs of the several baths, where some apartments were appropriated to uses very different from those, to which they were destined in others. I must farther add, that the indulgence of bathing was forbid, by way of mortification, during any time of public mourning, or calamity,

mity. The same punishment was observed against particular persons, who had been guilty of notorious misdemeanours. And now, my CHARLES, I leave you to make your own remarks upon these stupendous works of art ; of which the few remains, and the lamentable ruins, may serve to convince us, of how short duration all human greatness is appointed by the unsearchable decrees of heaven. A melancholy thought ! were it not relieved by those Christian doctrines, that lead us to look forward to real glory, and eternal happiness, in a future state.

But no reflexions, that may arise upon the general decay of empire, or the particular devastation of the theatres, towers, and gorgeous palaces of *Rome*, can equal that astonishment, with which we must immediately be filled, in a speculative review of the origin and progress of the Roman government ; a government begun by fratricide and murders, augmented by robberies and rapes, established by valour and conquest, undone by luxury and vice. It must ever seem wonderful in the eye of contemplation, that a rabble, consisting of thieves and vagabonds, should form themselves into a civil society, should submit to laws, and should be passive to regal authority. So many concurring testimonies agree in this point, that we are at a loss, which most to admire, the wisdom of ROMULUS, or the obedience of his people. The latter was of no long duration ; the natural fierceness of his subjects broke out, soon after their establishment, and ended in the secret destruction of their king. Let us, if you please, leaving out all the fabulous parts of that history, cursorily discuss the state of the Romans under their seven successive monarchs. To go farther might lead us into too large a field : and in passing through those seven reigns, you will easily distinguish the original constitution and progress of the Roman senate, during the monarchical state.

That

A dissertation on the monarchy and senate of Rome.

That assembly is represented as a branch of government, in which all power, or at least an equal power with the regal authority, was established and confirmed. But, if we examine minutely the several acts of senate, from the time of ROMULUS, to the banishment of TARQUINIUS SUPERBUS, we shall find that the senatorial power was originally confined within very narrow limits, and generally gained, or lost ground, according to the disposition of the prince upon the throne. I fear, even in so short a retrospect of the Roman state, it will be difficult to avoid a repetition of several facts perfectly well known, and copiously discussed, by many very learned, and very impartial authors. However, as these are so many leading avenues to the remarks arising from them, it would be impossible to go into any new road, and to arrive at the point in view.

After the foundation of Rome, ROMULUS proposed to his colony, then consisting of three thousand three hundred men, to chuse a government, that should best suit with their own inclinations. He laid before them three sorts; monarchy, aristocracy, and a mixed kind; not absolutely a republic, but a government, in which the people were to have some share. They unanimously declared for monarchy, and elected ROMULUS as their sovereign, without any conditions, or reserve.

1. ROMULUS.

ROMULUS, to endear himself to his own subjects, and to increase his power by alluring his neighbours to settle within his territories, began his reign with a strict regard to justice, and with a sincere view to the safety and happiness of his people. He divided his colony into three equal parts; which, from the word *tres*, he called tribes. They afterwards retained their name, although their number was increased. He then chose one hundred of the chiefest, and most distinguished persons, whom he appointed *senators*, and called them *fathers*: their children were called *patricians*; the rest

The senators.
Patricians.

rest were called *plebeians*; but they were again separated into two sorts, and distinguished by the two titles of *patrons* and *clients*. The patrons were a middle rank between the power, riches, and dignity of the senators, and the weakness, poverty, and meanness of the populace. The patrons were to assist, protect and defend their clients, each patron having a certain number of families under his own immediate protection. The clients were obliged to contribute towards the portions allotted for the daughters of their patrons, whose ransom they were also obliged to pay, and the ransom of their sons when taken in war; and to discharge them. These were so many badges of their slavery, which they foolishly looked upon as honours, and remained contented amidst labour, misery and want. In the beginning of this new state, no senator could be a patron; the senators by office were the judges of the people; a title incompatible with that of patron.

Thus the whole colony was divided into senators, patrons, and clients. ROMULUS appointed the senate to administer justice, to take upon them the care of religion, and to assist the king with their counsels, upon any occasion, wherein he acquired their advice. From whence we may observe, that the senate, although the only court of judicature, both in regal, and in religious matters, were nevertheless controllable by the king, who, at the same time, that he gave them an authority superior to any of his other subjects, yet did not thoroughly divest himself of his own right and power. The senate, by the original foundation, seems in one respect not unlike the privy council of our kings of *England*: they were to assist their prince, whenever he pleased to summon them, or demand their assistance: They might advise, but the king was under no necessity to follow that advice. This indeed is the single instance, in which the comparison holds; for the senators were for life, and could not

Plebeians.

Patrons and clients.

The power of the senate

In one instance like the privy council of England.

The senators, in what manner chosen, and how many.

not be degraded, except on occasion of some misdemeanor, and then only by the judgement of their own body : neither did the king name the senate ; he granted that privilege to the people : ninety-nine were elected out of the patricians. Each tribe chose three ; and then, each tribe being divided into ten *curia*, or parishes, each *curia* chose three, which made the number ninety-nine : And ROMULUS chose one, who was called *Princeps senatus*, a kind of lord mayor, who governed *Rome* whilst the king was in the field. Thus was the number completed one hundred. Upon the agreement between the Romans and the Sabines, ROMULUS and ^a TITUS TATIUS reigned in *Rome*. TITUS formed a council of one hundred senators of his own nation.

It is certain, that the senate had not any power, or permission to make laws. ROMULUS reserved that prerogative to himself : and the power of the senate was only executive, not legislative. But during the weakness and infancy of the Roman colony, it seems as if ROMULUS had so often consulted the senate, and applied for their approbation, that from thence they assumed a right of being always consulted. On the other hand, the king finding, by perpetual success, a large increase of riches, subjects, and dominions, thirsted after the exercise of more power, than he had hitherto aimed at, or assumed. The chief passion of ROMULUS was ambition, and if we may believe a poet,

Ambition is a weed, that's always found
To spread the farthest in the richest ground ;

^a TITUS TATIUS was murdered at the altar *anno urbis* 14. It is probable, that ROMULUS encouraged, or at least connived at the murder. LIVY tells us, that TATIUS was assassinated in the city of *Lavinium*.

Fair to the eye, the fragrant blossoms rise,
But he, who plucks the fruit, and tastes it, dies.

The senators were now no longer the counsellors and assistants of their prince : they became a shadow, and an empty name : they were assembled merely to preserve form, or only to communicate to the people the commands of the king ; of whose arbitrary sway they every day felt fresh instances. These repeated slights enraged the fathers ; they conspired against ROMULUS, and murdered him in the thirty seventh year of his reign ^a.

The first misunderstanding between the senators, and their sovereign, certainly arose from the want of proper limits ; which ought originally to have been settled for their mutual benefit and direction. The senators imagined, that they had a larger part in the legislature, and a greater share in the affairs of state, than ROMULUS intended to give them : and then again ROMULUS, tired with their formalities, and disagreement, endeavoured to deprive them of those rights, and usages, which he had originally granted, and permitted them to exercise. *Inde iræ faciles.* During the *interregnum*, the senate, now two hundred in number, took upon themselves the government, with a design to have kept it, had not the people broke in upon those intentions, by declaring, " they were resolved to have a king." The senate immediately decreed, that the people should choose a king, but reserved the approbation of that choice to themselves : and the people, pleased with the certainty of having a king, remitted the choice of a sovereign to the senate, who chose NUMA POMPILIUS to fill the vacant throne. If ROMULUS had left a son to succeed him, the crown, in all likelihood, would have been hereditary : but, he dying without chil-

^a See HOOKER'S Roman History, page 44.

dren, the crown became elective ; the people claiming the right of election, and the senate of approbation.

2. NUMA
POMPILI-
VS.

During the reign of NUMA the senate had no power of making laws. All histories agree, that NUMA, by his own authority, regulated the rites and ceremonies of religion, without the intervention of the senate. I am apt to impute this power to the superstitious fear, which the Romans entertained of the goddess EGERIA, with whom the king pretended to hold frequent conversations in a cave ; and from whom he gave out such maxims, and commands, as he thought most conducive to the benefit of the state. This pious prince created a set of religious heralds, called *feciales*. Their office was to demand satisfaction, in case the Romans were injured ; and if the aggressors refused to make a proper submission and acknowledgment, the heralds were then to return, and to report to the king, that they had discharged their duty, and that nothing hindered *Rome* from making war. He also constituted *pontifices* [priests] who had the entire management of all things relating to religion, and the worship of the gods : they had a president called *Pontifex maximus*, and they afterwards obtained a privilege of filling up the vacant posts in their college, independent both of the king, and the people. The whole reign of NUMA was a scene of prudence, moderation, and piety. His pacific temper, and political abilities, very happily succeeded to the rough and fiery nature of ROMULUS : and his conduct, and turn of mind, seem to answer, in many particulars, the character of MOSES, who is represented to us, as a man *very meek, above all the men, which are upon the face of the earth.*

3. TULLUS
HOSTILIUS

On the death of NUMA, the senate, during the *interregnum*, again assumed the government. They assembled the people by their authority, who chose TULLUS HOSTILIUS for their king, and the senate confirmed

confirmed the choice. In his reign it appears, that by virtue of his sovereign authority, and without assistance of the senate, or the formalities of a trial, he condemned FUFFETIUS, general of the Alban army, for treachery, and high treason, and ordered him to be torn in pieces by two chariots. The punishment was rigorously executed according to the king's command: nor is it evident, that the senate exercised any judicature during his whole reign.

On the death of TULLUS, the senate took upon themselves the government. The people elected AN-⁴ CUS MARTIUS, and the senate confirmed the election. In his reign there is no account of any acts of state, or judicature, by the senate.

On the death of ANCUS, the senate, as usual, assumed the government; the people elected TARQUI-⁵ NIUS PRISCUS, an Etrurian; and the senate gave their approbation. He created one hundred new senators, under the title of *senatores minorum gentium*; probably because they were chosen out of those, who came with him to Rome, or out of the people most zealous for his election: but these senators, although distinguished by such inferior title, had equal authority with the former. TARQUIN, from the time of his coming to the crown, had a view to make it hereditary in his own family; and to obtain this end, he courted both the senate and the people. He augmented their powers and their privileges; but he acted this part, not by compulsion, but by choice. If the senate gained ground in his reign, it was owing to the design he had of leaving the kingdom to his own son. And when he shewed such uncommon submission to that assembly, as to refuse certain regal ornaments sent to him from Etruria, till a decree passed, that he might wear them, he gave up the appearance of his authority in a trifle, in hopes of securing to himself, by such an act of indulgence, the great point, at which he aimed, of making

making the crown hereditary to his descendants; at least, to his sons. Upon a strict review of the monarchical government of *Rome*, to this time, it appears unlimited, and without restrictions, except, as has been already observed, in the ceremony of making war. The catastrophe of *TARQUINIUS PRISCUS* is perfectly well known. He was murdered by the sons of *ANCUS MARTIUS*, who fled as soon as they had killed the king; but were afterwards taken and executed.

6. *SERVIUS TULLIUS.*

We come now to a new scene: *SERVIUS TULLIUS* prevailed upon the senate to make him their sovereign, without waiting for the election of the people. The senators soon repented of their choice, and attempted to dethrone him, by alledging, that there was no *interregnum*, and that consequently the election was void: but *SERVIUS* disappointed their design, and procured himself to be elected by the people. The alterations and additions, which this prince made in the government, are remarkable. He added a fourth tribe to the city, and divided the Roman territories into fifteen counties, tribes, or hundreds. He instituted the *census*, which at first only imported an estimate, or valuation, of every man's estate. He separated all the Roman people into six different classes; and gave, in effect, to the first class, who were the richest, the whole authority of determining such points, as were, before this time, submitted to the cognisance of the people in the *comitia*; assemblies, to which all the *curiæ* were summoned, where every person voted, and where the lower rabble, as being most numerous, often prevailed. He then divided all the classes into centuries, or companies, of one hundred men; and in the first class he had ninety eight centuries, which were in number three more than the other classes; so that when the first class was unanimous, the opposition of the remaining classes was fruitless, and ineffectual. By this method he

he secured the power to the richest and the wisest of the people : and from hence came the titles, *comitia curiata*, & *comitia centuriata* : there was also another, called *comitia tributa* ^{Comitia curiata, centuriata, et tributa.} ^a, derived from the word tribes.

He divided the freedmen into four tribes, and gave them the same privileges as plebeians. The senators at first murmured at this division, but after hearing his reasons, they were pacified. The tribes were now encreased to the number of twenty three.

The regal predecessors of **SERVIUS** had reserved the cognifance of all causes, both public and private, to themselves. Few processes in civil, or criminal affairs, were determined, except by the king : The determination of the senate and the people was only as advisers, and approvers of the king, and his edicts. The king first examined, and prepared all causes for a public hearing ; and the people gave their votes according to the manner, in which their sovereign represented whatever he thought proper to lay before them. But if they rejected his propositions, their dissent was of no consequence : the king might still pursue what measures he thought proper.

SERVIUS finding this burden too great, reserved only affairs of state to himself, and committed the examination of ordinary suits to the senate. He laid down a form of proceedings for them, but absolutely transferred the care and power of trying private causes, from himself into other hands. Here indeed **SERVIUS** parted with a great prerogative of the crown ; and rendered it in some measure not so absolute as it had been. The senate were no sooner armed with weapons, than they employed those weapons against **SERVIUS** himself. He was obliged to appear before them to defend his right to the crown, in a dispute

^a The *comitia tributa* were put in practice at the trial of **CORNICIANUS**, where he received sentence of perpetual banishment. See **HOOKER'S** Roman History, book 1. chap. 7. p. 92.

betwixt him and his son-in-law TARQUIN. This was the first step towards the power of the senate. That assembly had hitherto been of little consequence. The quick progress they made, in the enlargement of that power, will soon appear.

7. TARQUINUS SUPERBUS.

SERVIUS TULLIUS, although his right to the crown was adjudged, and confirmed to him by the senate and the people, was soon after murdered by TARQUINIUS SUPERBUS, who seized upon the royal diadem by violence, sought no election, and defended himself by his guards. His numerous acts of tyranny, and the rape of LUCRETIA by his son, gave the Romans an opportunity of shewing a spirit becoming the greatest people in the world. They banished TARQUIN, and they extirpated the race of kings. But before we look into the new form of government, let us consider what observations will naturally occur in relation to the Roman senate, during the monarchical state, which FLORUS calls the childhood of Rome.

The power of the senate.

It is plain, that the senators owed their rise to ROMULUS, and had no power, except what he granted.

The power, first granted, was only to administer justice, to take care of religion, and to assist the king with their counsels on occasion.

The senate had no certain independent power, till the law of SERVIUS TULLIUS. Before that time, whatever shew of authority they might sometimes exercise, it was owing more to the moderation and lenity of the kings, than to any absolute right in the senate. Their only positive power was during the *interregnum*; betwixt the death of one king, and the election of another. Then they assembled the people, who chose the king, and they confirmed the popular choice; and if they had acted otherwise, in all probability they might have been torn to pieces.

The only rights inherent to the people were their assemblies, the election of a king, and the choice of *pontifices*,

pontifices, auspices, and augurs. This was the situation of *Rome* during the first two hundred and forty three years.

The catastrophe of **LUCRETIA** raised an universal alarm. The senate immediately assembled, and passed a decree, in which they condemned the **Tarquins**, and all their posterity, to perpetual banishment; they deprived them of all the rights and honours of the regal power; and they prohibited every citizen, upon pain of death, either to act, or speak in favour of that family. **BRUTUS**, who was tribune of **TARQUIN**'s horse-guards, an office to which the power of assembling the *comitia* was annexed, after a short *interregnum*, in which the administration was entrusted to **SP. LUCRETIUS**, governor of *Rome*, brought all the people, lawfully assembled by *curiæ*, into the usual place, where they gave their votes. The people were unanimous, and a decree was made with one voice, that the **Tarquins** should no longer be suffered to rule upon the throne, or to remain in *Rome*; and that their adherents should be punished by death. Here we see a distinction made betwixt the royal family, and their followers: the princes were only to be banished, but their adherents were to suffer death. Such an edict shews in how great reverence this rising nation held their kings, at a time when death seemed almost too mild a punishment for the *Tarquian* race.

BRUTUS, in his speech upon this occasion, said, that he very well understood the divisions between the people, and the senate; and the mutual jealousies, that they entertained of each other; jealousies, which had given great advantages to the tyrannic disposition of the kings. He added, that **ROMULUS**, and such of his successors, who acted with wisdom and integrity, had endeavoured to keep the balance of the two contending parties even, and to moderate the incroachments, that were attempted on either side.

“ This, says he, must be the work also of our future government : but, because the power of reigning over the Roman state is a dominion not to be entrusted in the hands of one man, let us appoint two annual magistrates, who shall have the name of consuls. And that we may still retain the venerable name of king, let us fix upon one particular person, who shall have the superintendency of religion, and shall be called the king of sacred things ; and let his office be for life.”

To this purpose spoke L. JUNIUS BRUTUS ; and the senate and people immediately established the new form of government proposed to their choice ; a form, which, however well designed, had, in effect, no other difference, than the exchange of one absolute king, for two as absolute consuls. If the people were pleased, the senators had no less reason to be satisfied ; for as they were the first body in the republic, so were they most concerned to exclude the kings, who always kept them in a state of dependence, and sometimes under oppression. SERVIUS TULLIUS gave them the first taste of power and authority, which had he not done, it is probable neither the tyranny of TARQUIN, nor the rape of LUCRETIA, would have awakened in them the sense of liberty, or the desire of so total a revolution in the state.

The senators how elected.

The right of naming senators, and of filling up the vacancies, when any family was extinct, or attainted, belonged at first to the kings. Upon the demolition of monarchy, the *consuls* chose the senatorial fathers, and referred to the people, for approbation. At last the *censors* engrossed the whole privilege of conferring this great honour. He, who was placed first in the *censor's* roll, the list, which contained the names of all the senators, was deemed *princeps senatus*. But the consuls, dictators, and chief magistrates took place of him, and were his superiors in the senate house.

The

The power of assembling the senate was now ratified in the *consuls*, and afterwards in the *praetors*, the *tribunes* of the commons, and the *interrex*, except upon extraordinary occasions; and then the *tribuni militum*, who were invested with consular power, and the *decemviri*, who were appointed to regulate the laws, could assemble the senate, when they thought proper: and this power was extended to other magistrates of less distinction, who were chosen in great emergencies, and upon unusual events.

The power of assembling the senate.

If we consider the Romans in their new form of government, we shall find, that they owed their greatness to a steady perseverance, arising almost to an inveterate obstinacy, in all their undertakings. Of this kind, joined to an artful piece of barbarity, was that perverse and cruel action of BRUTUS, who persisted in the execution of his own children, contrary to the yearnings of nature, the dictates of humanity, and the outcries of the people. A short account of the conspiracy, and of the trial of these parricides, may serve to discover some of the Roman usages, and the state of judicature in those times. And it may first be premised, that the accusation was not in writing, as with us, but verbal only; and the accused were obliged to answer immediately; and when the prisoners refused to answer, or plead, or, as we say, stood mute, it was a confession of guilt, and an acknowledgment, that the accusation was just.

The sons of BRUTUS, and the nephews of COL- LATINUS, had entered into an engagement with several of the young Patricians, to destroy the consuls, and to restore the kings. They had bound themselves up to this engagement by an horrid oath, and by dreadful ceremonies. They had sacrificed a man, they had made libations of his blood to the gods, and they had sworn over his trembling entrails, to abolish the commonwealth, and to reinstate the Tarquins. Their resolutions were discovered by VINDI-

The conspiracy of the sons of BRUTUS, and the nephews of COLLATINUS.

CIUS, a Roman slave; and the people were immediately summoned to the *comitia*, where the consuls, BRUTUS and COLLATINUS, sat on the tribunal of justice. The prisoners, with their hands tied behind them, were fastened to stakes. And BRUTUS began with the trial of his own sons, TITUS and TIBERIUS.

The trial of
the sons of
BRUTUS.

The slave, who had discovered the conspiracy, was examined, and his testimony was full, clear, and unanswerable. The association, signed by the conspirators, in favour of the Tarquinian family, was also produced; and the whole plot was so manifest, that the prisoners relied more upon the eloquence of their tears, than upon any other defence. The consul BRUTUS rose up with that kind of coolness, which rather meets with amazement than applause, and demanded what his sons had to say in their own vindication. They were silent, and their silence confessed their guilt. They were three times called upon to defend themselves, and as they still continued silent, they were convicted upon the evidence, that had been given. And the sentence of death was to be pronounced against them, when a general murmur of compassion discovered itself amongst the senators, and the people. They pitied the father, and the uncle, and were willing to mitigate the sentence, by petitioning the consuls, in these words, and with one general voice, "Spare their lives, and send them in-
"to banishment." But BRUTUS, inexorably rigid, and absolutely determined not to depart from the strictest rules of justice, pronounced this sentence against his two unhappy sons, "*Lictors*, I deliver
"them over to you, to execute the law upon them." The people were shocked at the inhumanity of his nature, and discovered in their looks all the marks of sorrow and consternation. But the consul remained unmoved: he scorned to abate any one of the punishments allotted to the greatest criminals. He ordered them to be beaten with rods in his presence,
and

and he staid to see their heads struck off : when this last scene was over, he quitted the tribunal, and went home.

After the departure of BRUTUS, the trial of the The trial of the AQUILII. AQUILII, nephews to COLLATINUS, fell to the share of that consul. His proceedings were very different from those of his colleague : he would have allowed the prisoners one whole day to clear themselves. This intended partiality enraged and surpris'd the people. But their astonishment was still greater, when he ordered their slave, VINDICIUS, the principal witness against the conspirators, to be delivered to his masters ; a piece of nepotism, which met with the opposition it deserved. VALERIUS, a Roman of strict virtue, although falsely suspected to favour the Tarquins, having been joined by his friends and clients, rescued VINDICIUS from the hands of the lictors, and saved the man, who had saved the state. The tumult encreasing, BRUTUS was called back to the *comitia*, where he made this remarkable speech : “ Romans, the authority I had over my children, made me sacrifice them to the public welfare. The authority, which the law gives you over all the subjects of the commonwealth, leaves you to determine the fate of the prisoners, by your suffrages. Either condemn my want of mercy, by instances of lenity ; or approve my firmness of mind, by examples of justice.” The *curiæ* immediately voted liberty and a reward to VINDICIUS, and condemned the conspirators, first to undergo the ignominy of being whipt, and afterwards to lose their heads.

It is evident, that the people would have pardon-Reflexions upon the behaviour of BRUTUS. ed the sons of BRUTUS, or at least would have mitigated their punishment : but they were obliged to submit to the judgement and decision of the consul. The difficulty then presents itself from the speech of BRUTUS, on his return to the *comitia*. He tells the people, that he executed his sons by his paternal authority ;

thority; but the pardon, or condemnation of the other prisoners, was vested entirely in the *curia*. Certainly it was not. The speech of BRUTUS was a piece of artifice, to gain the affections of the people. And we find afterwards, by divesting himself in the same manner of a real authority, and translating the power into the hands of the *curia*, he gained his point, in removing COLLATINUS from the consulship. It is true, as a father, the Roman laws had given him the power over the lives of his children: but it is evident, he did not execute his sons by virtue of those laws. Such executions must have been private, as the offence, which incurred the punishment, could tend only to the person of the father, or the disturbance of his private family. But the crimes of the sons of BRUTUS were of another nature. They affected the public, and therefore the criminals underwent the punishment of the *fascēs*, which, as freemen of *Rome*, they could not have undergone, unless they had been convicted of treason against the state. BRUTUS, a man of infinite cunning and foresight, knew when to loosen, and when to draw in the reins of power; and the people were amply satisfied with the appearance of an authority, which was granted only to fulfil the intentions of the consul, and to forward the future accomplishments of his designs.

The state of *Rome*, which had formerly gone under the denomination of a kingdom, was now changed into a commonwealth. But the government itself suffered little or no alteration, except of names. The consuls, as I have already observed, succeeded to all the rights and powers of the preceding kings. They had the care and disposal of the treasury. They had the right of declaring war, and of concluding peace; and the power of determining civil and criminal causes. JUNIUS BRUTUS and TARQUINIUS COLLATINUS were the first consuls, whom the Romans elected. The latter was chosen in preference

to P. VALERIUS, whose mind was much chagrined, and whose ambition was extremely disappointed at seeing a branch of the Tarquin family preferred to himself. From this disappointment may be deduced the source of all the future actions of VALERIUS; actions, which first kindled the people into sedition and outrages, and afterwards led them to grasp at arbitrary power. P. VALERIUS was a man of great virtues, and of great ambition: in talents, courage, and judgement, he was esteemed superior to the consul COLLATINUS, who soon became a victim to the cunning of BRUTUS, and to the ambition of VALERIUS: nor need I trouble you with the particulars of a fact so universally known, as the abdication of COLLATINUS, and the election of VALERIUS in his stead. The new consul, and his colleague BRUTUS, began their administration by making a law, which granted a general amnesty to all, who had followed the Tarquins, and who should return within twenty days; but if in that time they did not appear, their effects were to be confiscated, and their banishment was to be declared perpetual.

TARQUINIUS SUPERBUS had at this juncture assembled an army of great force. The Romans, headed by their consuls, went out to meet their enemies, and a battle ensued. BRUTUS fell in a single combat with ARUNS. The numbers of soldiers killed on each side were equal, and the victory remained dubious, till by a stratagem of a pretended voice from heaven, the Romans were encouraged, and the Tarquinians and Veientes were dismayed into a precipitate and shameful flight. VALERIUS triumphed for his victory over the Tarquins. But it is not mentioned, whether this triumph was by his own authority, or by decree either of the senate, or of the people. We may presume the triumph was assumed by his own authority: the kings had often triumphed, and, at present, the consular power was equal to what the
monarchical

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monarchical power had been : otherwise the triumph must have been authorized by the senate ; the people not having yet pretended to intermeddle in granting honours.

VALERIUS, after the death of BRUTUS, seemed in no haste to have a colleague chosen. He omitted to assemble the people, and his delay gave room for jealousy. It was surmised, that he intended to act alone. Men of his cast of mind are impatient of equals, and very desirous of reigning without a partner. The jealousies of him were increased by a magnificent house, which he was at this time building, upon that part of the hill *Palatinus*, called the upper *Velia*. This hill commanded the *Forum Romanum*, and the *Comitium*, so that the house appeared to the suspicious Romans as a fortress, from whence he might command the whole city. Surmises of this sort were too universal, not to reach the ears of the consul, and his friends. He listened to advice, and hastened to remove the murmurs of his fellow citizens. He sent workmen in the night to pull down his great house, and the next morning he desired to justify himself in a public speech. As a preparation to prepossess his audience in his favour, he ordered his lictors to bow the *fascēs* before the people. In this step he servilely departed from the dignity of a consul. Such a precedent was of dangerous consequence ; it elevated the thoughts of the people towards majesty and power. LIVY, who makes the best speeches of any historian, gives a peculiar turn to the oration of VALERIUS, concluding it in this manner : “ The liberty of Rome shall never be endangered, Romans, by the house of PUB. VALERIUS : your *Velia* shall be safe.

* *Non obstabunt P. VALERII ædes libertati vestrae, Quirites : tuta erit vobis Velia. Deferam non in planum modo ædes, sed colli etiam subjiciam ; ut vos supra suspectum me civem habitetis. In Velia ædificent, quibus melius quam P. VALERIO creditur libertas. LIV. lib. 2.*

“ I will

“ I will not only bring my house into the plain, but
 “ I will build it at the foot of the hill ; that you
 “ may dwell over the head of a citizen, whom you
 “ suspect. Let those dwell in *Velia*, to whom you
 “ can more safely entrust your liberties, than to VA-
 “ LERIUS.”

This speech carried in it submission and reproach, and roused the multitude to look back on the former great actions of VALERIUS. Their jealousies were immediately removed, and their fears were calmed, by reconsidering his superior merits.

The *comitia* were now ordered to assemble ; and the historians tell us, that the people were left entirely free in the election of a new consul. Such an extent of power granted to the people, at this time, is very remarkable. They had a right to chuse their kings, and afterwards their consuls ; but that choice was to be approved and confirmed by the senate. If the people had an entire freedom of choice, without any appeal to the senate, as upon this occasion they seem to have assumed ; that freedom was an infringement upon the rights of the senate, and can only be accounted for in this manner. VALERIUS, if we may judge of his views by his actions, aimed at such a degree of popularity, as should secure him in the government, and confirm him in future consulships by the voice of the people. To effect this design, he not only found it necessary to weaken the dignity, and to lessen the privileges of the consuls and senate, but to augment the power, and heighten the authority of the people. Having attempted in vain to be a king, it is probable he turned his thoughts towards a perpetual consulship. Here, my CHARLES, perhaps I may incur your censure ; you will imagine me too severe against a Roman, whom history characterises as a patriot, and who, by various instances of humanity, attained the very summit of popular love and applause. But allow me to hint to you,
 that

that ambition, where she aims to be most prevalent, puts on so resembling a mask of virtue, as renders the deceit very difficult to be perceived. Other vices will sometimes venture boldly to shew themselves, and will audaciously boast their acquisitions in defiance to the censure of mankind : but ambition is always silent, and tries every shape to avoid a discovery. Her actions seem to flow from pure streams, and living fountains. But upon a close inquisition, they will be found drawn from deep and dirty wells, or from pools of filth and mire, not unmixed with blood. Let us now resume the history, and proceed to tell you, that SP. LUCRETIVS, the father of LUCRETIA, was chosen consul in the room of BRUTUS. He was a man of a most unblemished character, but being old, and infirm, lived not many days, leaving VALERIUS once again in the sole possession of the consular power.

Before the election of another consul, PUB. VALERIUS made so many laws in favour of the people, that he obtained the name of PUBLICOLA : and became the idol of the plebeians, whom, in return, he courted by all acts of service, even to the destruction of the present constitution.

He had already obliged the lictors to lower the *fasces* before the assembly of the people ; he now began his administration, by altering the *fasces* themselves. He ordered the *axes* to be taken out of the *fasces*, lest the sight of those instruments of death should strike a terror into the people. This was a fresh instance of ambitious cunning in PUBLICOLA. He knew, that trifling forms, and useless ceremonies, captivate the vulgar ; and he was resolved to seize every opportunity and circumstance, that could endear him to their affections.

The laws of
PUBLICOLA.

The laws he enacted, whilst he remained alone in the consulship, were these :

The

The first, that every criminal be allowed to appeal to the people : and that no final sentence be given, except by decree of the curiæ.

The second, that all artificers be discharged, and excused from paying tribute ; and also all widows and old men, who have not children to support and relieve them.

The third, that there be an absolute submission to the orders of the consuls ; and that such persons, who disobey such orders, be fined in the value of five oxen, and two rams.

The fourth, that any person, who shall know of a formed design to usurp the regal power, be permitted to kill the author of such a design, without waiting till he be legally condemned. And that the same punishment be appointed for all those, who usurp any public office without consent of the people.

These four laws demand a moment's attention. The first is contrary to the establishment of the state under the consuls : it removes all power from them, and fixes the dominion in the people. Nor can it be supposed, that one consul could legally dispose of the rights of his colleague, which were equal with his own. This law was the occasion of much future mischief to the republic.

The second law is very humane, and very just ; more especially in regard to the widows and old men.

The third has the appearance of giving power to the consuls, but the reality of that power is destroyed by the first law, which leaves a constant appeal from the consular decrees to the people.

The fourth law was probably enacted to show the Romans, what an abhorrence PUBLICOLA entertained of monarchy : the latter part was entirely agreeable to the people.

Hitherto the public treasure had been committed and entrusted to the care of the kings, and, after their expulsion, to the consuls. PUBLICOLA, by his
own

own authority, removed this trust from the consuls to the people, who chose out of their own body two *questors*, from hence called *questores ararii*, to whom they delivered the management and custody of the treasury.

Thus did one man, invested with the might and majesty, but detained from the title of a king, by various innovations, and notorious infringements upon the consular and senatorial rights, create and confirm a new right in the people. And thus were the actions of PUBLICOLA more arbitrary in their beginning, and, as it afterwards proved, more pernicious in their consequence, than the edicts of king TARQUIN the proud.

MARCUS HORATIUS PULVILLUS, according to LIVY, succeeded SP. LUCRETIUS in the consulship. A most flagrant instance of the envy and ambition of PUBLICOLA, and his party, happened within the same year. The temple of JUPITER in the capitol was not yet dedicated; the consuls therefore cast lots; chance gave the honour of dedication to HORATIUS. The consul PUBLICOLA was obliged to march against the Veientes. The friends of PUBLICOLA, whom LIVY calls the *Valerii*, resented, in a very unbecoming manner, the glory fallen to the share of HORATIUS, of dedicating so famous a temple. They tried all methods to prevent the dedication. All their stratagems proved abortive. At length driven to the last resource of malice and revenge, they abruptly informed the consul, in the very moment while he was holding the post of the temple, and addressing his prayer to JUPITER, that his son was dead; and they added farther, that on this melancholy occasion it would be indecent, and improper, to pursue the dedication of the temple. He received the account with intrepidity and fortitude. It is probable he imagined it false; nor would he suffer himself to be longer interrupted, than to give orders for the burial of his son; and
continuing

continuing to hold the post of the temple in his hand, he finished his prayer, and dedicated the edifice to JUPITER.

In the ensuing year PUBLICOLA was rechosen, and TITUS LUCRETIVS was elected his colleague. The Romans were now threatened by a message from PORSENNA, king of the Hetrurians. He had prepared a very numerous army to attack *Rome*, and to re-establish in the throne the Tarquinian family, who had taken refuge at his court. The senate, upon this occasion, appeared under the utmost terror and amazement. Their fears proved of use and happiness to the people. They immediately enacted several laws suitable to the necessities of the populace. They renewed such institutions as had been abolished by TARQUINIUS SUPERBUS. The meaner people were exempted for ever from the servile labours, to which that king had subjected them. They were also exempted from paying tribute towards the expences of the *militia*; a tax, which had been always enacted in time of war. The tax on entries was taken off: all provisions came free into the city: every Roman was allowed to sell salt publickly; nor was that commodity to be any longer monopolized by particular persons. The tax on salt had been established by the kings.

The senate assigned COCLES, in reward of his gallant behaviour upon the bridge, a real estate, consisting of as much land as could be enclosed within a circular furrow by a plough in one day. By this donation we may conclude, that the senate had the disposal of the city lands, and the power of granting public rewards: but these powers were always in conjunction with the consuls, without whom, the senators were a body without a head, and with whom, they appeared a body without a heart: or, to own to you very freely my own opinion, I look upon the senate

nate in the commencement of the commonwealth, to be no more than the echo of the consuls.

PORSENNA, after the famous attempt against his life by MUTIUS SCÆVOLA, sent ambassadors to *Rome* with propositions of peace. The king of *Hetruria* had been much alarmed at the intrepidity of MUTIUS, who, still to encrease his fears, had declared, that three hundred Romans were engaged in a conspiracy to destroy him. The Hetrurian envoys were admitted into the senate, where, among other demands, they insisted, that the TARQUINS should either be restored to their estates, or should receive an equivalent. PUBLICOLA prevailed upon the senate, ever obedient to his inclinations, to comply with their demands. But the populace, assembled in centuries, acted a part more worthy of Romans: they refused to restore the lands demanded by TARQUIN, till they had made their complaints of that tyrant to PORSENNA himself, who having heard the allegations of the Romans, and being incensed at the cruelties of the TARQUINS, renounced his alliance with that family, and made a peace with *Rome*.

Let me offer a conjecture upon the foregoing circumstances. PUBLICOLA had the senate absolutely under his command; and he imagined the people, whom he had so often gratified, would be implicitly obedient to his voice. He assembled them in centuries, that there might be an unanimity in the consuls, senate, and people, to receive the Hetrurian terms of peace. But herein I apprehend he was mistaken. The plebeians, by the many indulgent acts lately passed in their favour, began to grow conscious of the strength of power, and therefore refused, or rather deferred the offers of PORSENNA, that they might, in this instance, shew an opposition to the arbitrary decisions of the consuls, and the servile acquiescence of the senators.

When

When the peace was concluded, the senate erected a statue in honour of PORSENNA. They sent an embassy to him with various presents; a throne adorned with ivory; a sceptre; a crown of gold, and a triumphant robe. These acts could not interfere with ambition; and while the senate were pleased with such trifling powers, it may be presumed they enjoyed them without controul;

During the consulship of MARCUS VALERIUS and P. POSTHUMIUS, the Sabines committed devastations in the Roman territories. The consuls sent an embassy to demand satisfaction. The Sabines returned a contemptuous answer. War ensued. The Romans obtained an entire victory over the Sabines. They took the Sabine camp; and the consuls gave the plunder of it to the Roman soldiers. The consuls triumphed. The privileges and honours, bestowed by the senate upon this occasion, were not only great, but extraordinary. The senate built a house for VALERIUS; the door of which, contrary to the Roman custom, opened outwards into the street. To POSTHUMIUS the senate granted the privilege of a burial place, for himself and his family, within the walls of Rome. The permission was against an express law: *Hominem mortuum in urbem ne sepelito, neve urito*. But while the senators applied their bounties to the consuls, no laws could interrupt their munificence.

From this time to the consulship of SP. CASSIUS USCELLINUS and OPITER VIRGINIUS TRICOSTUS, the senate remained in the usual state of nominal power, and real inability. Skirmishes, battles, truces, and messages, had continued alternately between the Romans and the Sabines; till the consul SP. CASSIUS gave this year such an overthrow to the Sabines, as reduced them to make propositions of peace. They sent an embassy to the consul, offering him terms of friendship, which he refused to accept without an order from the senate; to whom he immediately com-

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municated the purposes of the Sabines. Here, CHARLES, is the first instance I can gather, wherein a consul refused to act from his own power, and applied for orders to the senate. PUBLICOLA died in the preceding^a consulship, and from his death may be dated the acquisitions of power, which accrued to the senate of *Rome*.

The Romans still laboured under difficulties in their new form of government. Many of their neighbours, who had been in alliance with the kings, renounced alliance with the republic; particularly the Latins, who endeavoured, by all methods, at the restoration of the Tarquin family. A conspiracy among the slaves was concerted this^b year. Their design was to seize the citadel and towers, and to set fire to the whole city of *Rome*. The plot was discovered, the conspirators received the punishment allotted to slaves. They were first beaten with rods, and then crucified. Murmurs and seditions grew contagious among the citizens. The Latins were preparing arms, and collecting troops with great alacrity. In this situation the Romans were again reduced to think of sheltering themselves under the protection of a single magistrate, whose power should be absolute, and his decrees beyond appeal. They intended to give him the most ample prerogatives of a king, with this reserve, that his reign should be temporary, and his office should cease at the end of some months. But this project was deferred at present. We shall find it hereafter executed in a more difficult conjuncture.

In the ensuing year, when SERVIUS Sulpitius and MANIUS Tullius were chosen consuls, the Latins sent ambassadors to *Rome*. The embassy in appearance brought propositions in favour of the Tarquinian family, and of *Fidene*, an ancient city of *Latium*, at

^a Of P. POSTHUMIUS and MENENIUS AGRIPPA.

^b POSTHUMUS COMINIUS and T. LARTIUS were consuls.

that

that time besieged by the Romans. But the chief point was to raise a sedition in the city. The conduct of which design was committed to the management of two brothers, PUBLIUS and MARCUS, relations of TARQUINIUS SUPERBUS. These men were unequal to the part, which they had undertaken; they were timid, superstitious, and distracted by omens and dreams; so that when most of the Roman slaves, and many of the meaner citizens had engaged in the conspiracy, and were firm and resolute in their design of overturning the government, the two brothers, actuated by fear and visionary dangers, revealed the plot, and the names of the conspirators, to SULPITIUS. The behaviour of the consul and of the senate was very different, and very remarkable upon this occasion. SULPITIUS secreted the two informers, and assembled the senate. The Latin ambassadors were called in, their demands and propositions were rejected, and they were dismissed; the consul then informed the senate of the conspiracy. The fathers, at the thought of danger, were exceedingly alarmed. The law of PUBLICOLA, whereby the definitive sentence was conveyed to the people, hindered any proper step to be taken. Such numbers of the citizens were involved in the guilt, that an appeal to the plebeians was rendered very hazardous. The plot was certain, but the proof was difficult. The witnesses were aliens, and enemies: their evidence might not avail, and if the conspirators were acquitted, immediate ruin must ensue. In cases of imminent danger, courage and cowardice equally appear. The latter was very visible in the senate of Rome, as the former was most apparent in the consul; the dejected fathers lost all presence of mind, they were incapable of stemming the torrent of difficulties, with which they were surrounded: and they placed upon the consul the entire burthen of punishing the guilty, and delivering the state. He acted with great wisdom and fortitude.

titude. He drew the conspirators by a stratagem into the *forum*, where finding themselves invested, and discovered, they acknowledged their crimes, and were ordered to be put to death. The people had been suddenly convened by *curiæ*, and were in too great consternation to give opposition to the decree. However many of the conspirators escaped, and it was judged proper, at that juncture, to carry the enquiries no farther. Sacrifices and expiations supplied the place of punishments. The times were dangerous; the people powerful and mutinous. The senate was timid and inactive. The Tarquin race had many friends without, and many well-wishers within the city walls. Impending wars threatened from abroad: plots and insurrections were to be apprehended at home. Such was the situation of the republic, in the two hundred and fifty third year of *Rome*.

In the twelfth consulship, and the year of *Rome* two hundred and fifty five, the smothered flames of popular sedition burst forth into open fire. Tumults arose under pretence of the hardships and oppressions sustained by the debtors from the creditors. If we look into the Roman laws concerning creditors and debtors, we shall find great room for complaint, and great want of reformation and amendment. The laws were these:

The laws relating to debtors and creditors.

When the debtor was insolvent, it was in the power of the creditor to put him in irons, or to sell him as a slave.

After a certain number of citations, the law granted to the debtor thirty two days of grace. In that time he was to raise the money, for which he was accountable. The words of the law are, *æris confessi, rebusque jure judicatis, triginta dies justi sunt. Post dein manum endo jacito. Vincito, aut nervo, aut compedibus.* The *triginta dies justi* are thirty days entire, between the day of giving judgement, and the day when the creditor might seize his debtor: these two days

days reckoned as part of the time made up the two and thirty days. After the expiration of this allotted time, if the debtor had not discharged the debt, he was led to the *prætor*, and delivered by the *prætor* to the mercy of his creditor, who bound and kept him in chains during sixty days, often whipping him most unmercifully.

Successive to this scene of cruelty, the debtor, during three market days following, was brought to the tribunal of the *prætor*; and a public crier proclaimed in the *forum* the debt, for which the prisoner was detained. It sometimes happened, that upon such proclamations, generosity, pity, or friendship, induced particular persons to redeem the prisoner, and pay the debt. But if no friend appeared, in behalf of the debtor, after the third market day, the creditor had a right to inflict the punishments appointed thus by the law. *Tertiis nudinis capite pœnas dato, aut trans Tiberim peregrè venum duito.*

It is farther said, that if there were several creditors, they were allowed to divide the body of the prisoner into several parts, and to share the parts amongst themselves, according to the sums, which they demanded. But humanity, and custom, stopped the execution of so rigorous a law; nor was it ever put in practice.

The original purport of these laws, instituted in the days of monarchy, and perhaps by ROMULUS himself, tended to promote œconomy, and to encourage labour and industry. They were framed to give the Roman people a dread of contracting debts; they were designed to quell the growth of idleness, and extravagant expence of every sort: but the punishments are of so severe a kind, that they shew more cruelty than policy in the lawgiver. While the people were excluded from any power in the state, they were obliged to submit to every institution and decree of their superiors: but when PUBLICOLA had

AN ESSAY on the

made such extensive laws in their favour, it is by no means amazing, that they should endeavour to redress grievances of such infinite prejudice to their persons, and liberties, and so intolerable to human nature itself. The time and manner, in which they chose to make their complaints, was improper and insolent; it was at a time, when the devastation of *Rome* was threatened by an approaching army of the Latins; and when the Romans were devoid of all foreign succours and alliance. The manner in which they mutinied, was by an absolute refusal to be enlisted in the troops necessary to be levied for the common defence; and the Latins were almost arrived at the gates of *Rome*, when the senate was convened by the consuls to meet upon this critical occasion.

Under these unhappy circumstances, the fathers seem to have exerted themselves in a more spirited manner, than they had shewn since the establishment of the commonwealth. They were divided in their opinions, according as their property was more or less concerned. Their speeches were rigorous or mild, as self-views were more or less rooted in the speakers: their votes were given with the utmost noise and clamour. But the perilous situation of the state required some immediate expedient; after variety of discord, the combustions ended in an unanimous decree of appointing a *dictator*.

The appointment of a dictator.

The design of creating such a magistrate was not entirely new. It had been intended, as is already mentioned, upon former apprehensions of danger. The power of the *dictator* was to be boundless; the existence of that power was limited to six months. The plebeians, who did not foresee to what end this alteration of government tended, gave their votes in the *comitia* in favour of the decree; and blindly permitted the senators to proceed to the election of one independent commander, who being constituted superior to the consuls was beyond the reach of PUP-

LICOLA'S

LIFE of PLINY.

LV

PUBLICOLA's law. T. LARTIUS was proclaimed *dictator*; and the people immediately lifted themselves without any murmurs. Ten legions were levied; a greater army than ever had been raised before.

LARTIUS the *dictator* created SP. CASIUS general of the Roman horse. The regal power being revived in the person of the *dictator*, he had the disposal of this high office, which was the second dignity in the state, and answered to the *Tribunus celerum*, chosen by the kings. LARTIUS was determined to sustain his dictatorship with as much majesty as possible. He was attended constantly by twenty four *libertors*. He restored to the *fasces* the axes, which had been taken away by PUBLICOLA. His outward behaviour was now as pompous and solemn, as it had been before humble and easy. He drew to himself the fear and respect of the people. The Latins sent a detachment to waste part of the Roman territory: the party was intercepted; many were killed, and many taken prisoners. On this occasion, the *dictator* behaved himself with the utmost generosity. He ordered the wounded to be taken care of, and their wounds to be dressed. He released the prisoners: and returning to Rome, he resigned his dictatorship, although the six months were not expired.

T. LARTIUS is created dictator.

He resigns his office.

This last action, the resignation of his office, has met with universal applause. The merit of it is indisputable. Humility and disinterestedness were the only motives, that could induce him to part with a more extensive authority than had hitherto been ever enjoyed by any Roman. But in point of policy, he ought to have retained the dictatorship, till he had quelled the seditious spirits at Rome; especially when faction lurked within her bosom, and mutiny was taking root within her walls. A *dictator* only could have reduced the people to obedience: A *dictator* only could have abolished PUBLICOLA's law. Lenity, in times of sedition, becomes a fault; and present mer-

Observations on that resignation.

An ESSAY on the

cy to the guilty proves future punishment to the innocent. A modern writer * observes, that the dictatorship of LARTIUS was free from proscriptions, and executions. It ought to have been filled with both. The times required the utmost severity: and therefore, CHARLES, although I agree with all the historians, who proclaim LARTIUS to have been a good man, and not only a brave, but a compassionate general; yet I cannot pronounce him a man of exquisite policy: he was too remissive of his power, whilst he enjoyed it, and too hasty in delivering up a prerogative, which he ought to have exerted by securing domestic tranquillity to the commonwealth.

Story over
e Latins
the dic-
tor Post-
MIUS.

The truce with the Latins expired, when AULUS POSTHUMIUS and TITUS VERGINIUS took possession of the consulship. The Latins immediately made preparations of war; and although sedition was not as yet sufficiently ripe to be openly avowed at Rome; yet it was thought proper to place the conduct of the war in the hands of a *dictator*. POSTHUMIUS was chosen into this high office. He gained a consummate victory over the Latins at the lake *Regillus*. The defeat obliged them to send deputies to Rome, imploring to be received, either as allies or subjects. The senate, to whom, by the complaisance of POSTHUMIUS, the power of making terms of peace was transferred, commanded the Latins to restore all prisoners taken during the war; to deliver up all deserters; and to banish king TARQUIN, and the Roman exiles, out of the territories of *Latium*. These terms were thankfully received by the Latins. And now TARQUINIUS SUPERBUS, the last of his name and family, two of his sons having fallen in battle at the Regilian lake, was driven out of *Latium* at ninety years of age. He was rejected by the Sabines, the Hetrurians and other nations. The miserable

death of K.
TARQUIN
he proud.

old king survived these misfortunes some few months, and died after an exile of fourteen years, at *Cumæ* in *Campania*, where he had found an asylum by the favour of the tyrant ARISTODEMUS.

I shall go no farther in the early part of the Roman History. With TARQUIN died all views of monarchy. The consular government has been the favourite topic of various historians: but few authors seem to have considered sufficiently the constitution of *Rome*, while she was governed successively by her seven kings. The regal government, like the foundation of a noble building, has been in a manner buried under ground; while the consular state, a superstructure erected upon that foundation, is decorated and placed in the most conspicuous point of light. The Romans date their freedom from the creation of their consuls: they imagine, that in the destruction of monarchy they disburdened themselves from the yoke of slavery. The fact is doubtful; at least it will admit of much speculation. But the absolute ruin of all the Roman liberties may certainly be dated from the choice of a perpetual dictator. But I will not detain you, even by hinting at particulars, so often related, and so perfectly well known.

Let us return to PLINY, and resume the thread of his life from the age of eighteen. I am not certain, that the epistles to TACITUS^a, giving an account of his uncle PLINY's death, ought to be dated this year^b. It is possible they may have been written within the year; but they have the appearance of a more distant date, especially from the expression, *Dubito constantiam vocare, an imprudentiam, debeam; agebam enim duodevicesimum annum*. However as I pass through the annals, I shall endeavour to allot some of the epistles to their particular years.

^a Book 6. Ep. 16 and 20.

^b A. U. C. 831.

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The elder PLINY outlived VESPASIAN a very short time: the emperor died on the twenty fourth of *June*, and PLINY perished on the twenty third of *August*.

The reign of
TITUS.

TITUS succeeded his father VESPASIAN, not without some opposition from his younger brother DOMITIAN, who with no less arrogance, than ingratitude, endeavoured to propagate a malicious and groundless report, that TITUS had altered his father's will in his own favour, and that VESPASIAN had appointed him [DOMITIAN] a joint partner in the empire with his brother.

PLINY be-
gins to plead
at the bar.

In the second year of TITUS, and the nineteenth year of his own age, PLINY began to plead in the public courts^a. In the same year, the capitol, which had been rebuilt by VESPASIAN, was again reduced to ashes^b; and a great part of the city destroyed by a fire, which raged three days and three nights; and which was followed by the most dreadful pestilence, that had been ever known in *Rome*. Thus was the short reign of TITUS one continued scene of calamities; first, by the eruption of *Vesuvius*, then, by a fire in the metropolis, and again, by the malignity

TITUS dies,
and is suc-
ceeded by
DOMITIAN.

of a plague. TITUS, the *Delicia humani generis*, died on the thirteenth day of *September*, in the third year of his imperial dignity^c. DOMITIAN, his successor, ordered divine honours to be paid him, and appointed PLINY, now in the twentieth, or twenty first year of his age, to be the *Flamen*, or high-priest, to this new deity; a circumstance, which proves PLINY to be married at this time. The *Fla-*

^a *Undevicesimo ætatis anno dicere in foro cæpi.* Lib. 5. Ep. 8.

^b It had been set on fire, and utterly consumed by NERO, in the eleventh year of his reign. He evaded the scandal of the action by accusing the Christians; many of whom he tortured, and put to death upon the occasion. This was called the first general persecution of the Church.

^c A. U. C. 833.

mines, originally instituted by NUMA, were three in number, or rather only one, the *Flamen Dialis* of JUPITER. Soon afterwards, a *Flamen* was destined to MARS, called *Flamen Martialis*, and another to ROMULUS under the title of *Flamen Quirinalis*. In time, the number was so increased, that the *Flamines* were as numerous as the Gods. Each emperor, as soon as he was ranked among the deities, had a *Flamen* allotted to him: but no man was eligible into the sacred order of the *Flamines*, who was not married. The *Flamen Titi Vespasiani* was the first public office, which PLINY enjoyed.

PLINY created
Flamen
Titi Vespasiani.

In the second year of DOMITIAN PLINY engaged himself in military employments. I imagine his turn of mind was more inclined to philosophy, than to arms: but he followed the prevailing method of education, and endeavoured to accomplish himself not only in the art of eloquence, but of war. In an epistle to TITUS ARIETUS^a, he mentions the miserable times, in which he was a soldier. His description is remarkable, and the stile of it is nervous. *Nos juvenes fuimus quidem in castris; sed cum suspecta virtus, inertia in pretio, cum ducibus auctoritas nulla, nulla militibus verecundia, nusquam imperium, nusquam obsequium, omnia soluta, turbata, atque etiam in contrarium versa, postremo obliviscenda magis, quam tenenda.*

Such was the beginning of DOMITIAN'S reign; a prince, who answers the character given of him by DION: "he destroyed with the quickness of lightning^b:" and indeed the velocity of the destruction could scarce be less rapid, when, so immediately after his accession to the throne, we find the state of Rome, as described by PLINY, reduced to the most abject degree of slavery.

^a Book 8. Ep. 14.

^b Πολλά μὲν αἰς σκεπτικῶς ὀξείως ἰμπίστων κτισίν. Dio. Lib. 67.

An ESSAY on the

PLINY a
military tri-
bune in Sy-
ria.

PLINY went into *Syria*, in the character of a military tribune; and while he remained in that province, he cultivated a friendship with EUPHRATES^a, and ARTEMIDORUS^b, two philosophers of remarkable eminence. Men of Virtue and literature were esteemed by him, in whatever station they appeared. He distinguishes, in a most particular and affectionate manner, three of his fellow soldiers, TYRO^c, POLLIO^d, and LUPUS^e; who, like himself, were afterwards farther dignified by civil employments. The military tribunes were erected at the same time of the year, the twenty fourth of *October*, when the consuls were declared.

He returns
out of *Syria*,

His return out of *Syria*, I think, may be dated in the third year of DOMITIAN: in the twenty second, or twenty third year of his own age. He was detained by contrary winds, in the island of *Icaria*, one of the Cyclades. During his stay there he composed a poem in elegiac verse upon the island, and the sea that surrounds it^f. The verses probably turned upon the fabulous story of ICARUS, of whom OVID says,

^a EUPHRATES philosophus, hunc ego in Syria, cum adolescentulus militarem, penitus, et domi inspexi, amarique ab eo laboravi, etsi non erat laborandum. Lib. 1. Ep. 10.

^b Artemidorum ipsum jam tum, cum in Syria tribunus militarem, arcta familiaritate complexus sum. Lib. 3. Ep. 11.

^c Caesarium Tyronem familiarissime diligo, et privatis mihi et publicis necessitudinibus implicitum. Simul militavimus. Lib. 7. Ep. 16.

^d Claudius Pollio amari a te cupit. Vir rectus, integer, quietus, ac pene ultra modum (si quis tamen ultra modum) verecundus. Hunc, cum simul militarem, non solum ut commilito inspexi. Lib. 7. Ep. 31.

^e Nymphidium Lupum, domine, primipilarem, commilitonem habui, cum ipse tribunus essem, ille praefectus: inde familiariter diligere coepi. Lib. 10. Ep. 19. LONGOLII.

^f Mox cum e militia rediens, in Icaria insula ventis detinerer, Latinos elegos in illud ipsum mare, ipsamque insulam feci. Lib. 7. Ep. 4.

Transit

*Transit et Icarium, lapsas ubi perdidit alas
Icarus, et vastæ nomina fecit aquæ^a.*

The original name of the island was *Icobyōssa*. The etymology is given by *Athenæus*, Ἐκαλεῖτο δὲ καὶ Ἰκαροῦ πρότερον Ἰχθυόεσσα, διὰ τὸ ἐν αὐτῇ τῶν ἰχθύων πλῆθος^b.

The questorship was the next public employment in which PLINY appeared. He was created *Questor* ^{PLINY appointed questor} *Cæsaris* in the twelfth year of DOMITIAN'S reign. His friend CALESTRIUS TYRO was made *Questor* *Cæsaris* at the same time^c. This magistracy was the first degree of senatorial honours. It gave an admission into the senate. In searching for the exact age necessary to obtain the questorship, you will find a great variety of opinions. I have affixed it to the thirtieth year of our author's age; agreeable to the law of POMPEY the great, which PLINY particularly mentions in a letter to TRAJAN, *Cautum est, domine, Pompejâ lege, ne quis capiat magistratum, neve sit in senatu minor annorum triginta*^d. The original, and even the later laws of Rome had been so totally altered, and so irrecoverably subverted, that it is scarce possible to obtain any certain rule for our direction. The particular æra, that is now before us, was corrupt, licentious, and in every respect disorderly: so that it is less difficult to ascertain the employments, which PLINY enjoyed, than the time when he enjoyed them.

The next year PLINY exercised the office of tribune ^{PLINY made} of the people, during which magistracy he withdrew ^{tribunus plebis.} himself from all pleadings at the bar. He says modestly, in a letter to POMPEIUS FALCO upon the occa-

^a Ovidii Fastorum. Lib. 4. v. 283.

^b Athenæus 1. 24.

^c Simul questores Cæsaris fuimus. Lib. 7. Ep. 16.

^d Lib. 10. Ep. 83. LONGOLII.

tion, *Ipsè, cum tribunus essem, erraverim fortasse, quàm me esse aliquid putavi, sed tanquam essem, abstinui causis agendis*^a. From this expression, and indeed from the tenor of the whole letter, he seemed fully determined to raise the tribuneship, if possible, to its primitive dignity. His greatness of mind would not suffer him to go on, like his predecessors, in debasing an employment, which by the submission of the people, and the ambition of their magistrates, was not only fallen from the first original, but was become of little or no importance. If all the preceding tribunes had acted in the same resolute manner, the Cæsars might possibly have been emperors, but they certainly could not have been tyrants.

PLINY appointed prætor.

In the thirty second year of his age PLINY was appointed prætor. In this year, the thirteenth of DOMITIAN'S reign, the philosophers were banished^b. ARTEMIDORUS, who resided at Rome, and who had contracted an intimate friendship with PLINY, from the time that he was in Syria, was obliged to quit the city. PLUTARCH returned to Chæronea^c, and EPICETUS returned to Nicopolis^d. The cruelties of DOMITIAN increased every day. CNÆUS JULIUS AGRICOLA, the father-in-law of TACITUS, and one of the greatest men, that even the Roman annals can produce, died this year, poisoned, as was generally furnished, by the emperor's orders. TACITUS seems to hint at some latent villany, when he says, *Otriso CIVICA nuper, nec AGRICOLÆ consilium detrat, nec DOMITIANO exemplum*^e. AGRICOLA himself seemed

^a Lib. 1. Ep. 23

^b *Equidem cum essent philosophi ab urbe secesserunt sui prætor.* Lib. 3. Ep. 11.

^c PLUTARCH was a native of Chæronea.

^d A city of Armenia. EPICETUS returned to Rome after DOMITIAN'S death.

^e TACITI, *vita* AGRICOLÆ. Sect. 42.

under no such suspicions: at least he met his fate with a noble firmness^a.

PLINY and HERENNIVS SENECIO were appointed, by the senate, advocates for the province of *Bætica*, against BÆVIUS MASSA. *Dederat me senatus cum HERENNIO SENECIONE advocatum provinciæ Bæticæ contra BÆVIUM MASSAM*^b. The behaviour of SENECIO, upon this occasion, was noble, and undaunted. PLINY mentions it very particularly^c. BÆVIUS MASSA was condemned to a forfeiture of his goods; and SENECIO, aware, that the decree of the senate might not be justly executed, or that the goods might be privately restored to MASSA, preferred a petition to the consuls, that the persons, to whom the goods of MASSA were assigned in custody, should not be permitted to embezzle them. Such a behaviour alarmed MASSA, and alarmed DOMITIAN. The murder of SENECIO was immediately resolved upon, and perpetrated. Soon afterwards, HELVIDIVS PRISCUS, and ARULENUS RUSTICUS, were put to death. JUNIVS MAURICUS the brother, and POMPONIA GRATILLA, the wife of RUSTICUS, were banished: as were also ARRIA, the wife of THRÆSEA PÆTUS, and FANNIA her daughter. All these were the intimate friends of PLINY. Three of them were barbarously murdered, the other four tyrannically sent into exile, during the year of PLINY's prætorian magistracy. When his office, as *prætor urbanus*, was expired, he withdrew from all public employments. It was the most prudent step, which he could take. Thunderbolts were flying around him. Many of his best friends were killed, or banished. His own words describe the senate, *Prospeximus curiam, sed curiam trepidam et elinguem, cum dicere, quod velles, periculosum*;

PLINY retires from all public employments.

^a *Ut perhibent, qui interfuerunt notissimis sermonibus tuis, constans et libens fatum excepisti, tamquam pro virili portione innocentiam principi donares, Ib. Sect. 45.*

^b Lib. 7. Ep. 33.

^c Lib. 3. Ep. 11.

quod

quod nolles, miserum esset *. In such times, a private station was the only post of honour.

Every year became signalized by the inhuman actions of DOMITIAN. Neither flies nor senators escaped him. He even grew wanton in his cruelties; and took particular delight in terrifying persons of the most illustrious families in Rome. A remarkable instance of this barbarous kind of levity is related by DION CASSIUS. "DOMITIAN, says that author, "invited many of the chief knights and senators to "an entertainment. They came at the hour appointed. They were conducted into a hall covered with black, and hung round with a few melancholy lamps. The lamps only afforded light enough to discover certain sepulchral pillars, upon which every person saw his own name engraved. "The company remained here some time, in that "kind of dreadful silence, which attends an apprehension of immediate destruction. On a sudden, "the doors of the hall flew open, and a great number of persons appeared naked, and painted black; "each held a torch and dagger in his hand. They "were followed by others, who served up a funeral repast. The consternation of the invited guests "increased, and their fears were redoubled; when "instantaneously the dismal scene was finished by a "declaration from one of the ministers of darkness, "that the emperor gave the company leave to depart." I omit several circumstances, that tend to exaggerate the terror of the feast. We could smile at such an entertainment, if DOMITIAN's sanguinary disposition did not strike us with a serious abhorrence even to his name.

The death
of DOMI-
TIAN.

He continued to exercise his cruelties till the sixteenth year of his reign; when he was killed by STEPHANUS PARTHENIUS, and other officers of his

* Lib. 8. Ep. 14.

household.

household ^a. His death was a fortunate event to the Roman people in general, and to PLINY in particular; as we may presume from an expression in one of his epistles ^b: *Nihil notabile secutum, nisi fortè quod non fui reus: futurus, si DOMITIANUS, sub quo hæc acciderunt, diutius vixisset. Nam in scrinio ejus datus à Caro de me libellus inventus est.*

To DOMITIAN succeeded NERVA, a prince, whose ^{NERVA succeda.} virtues seem rather to have been of the negative, than of the positive kind. He was not cruel, but he was not enterprising. His piety consisted in a belief of prodigies, and a reliance in the prophetic visions of APOLLONIUS TYANÆUS, a magician. He was humane, because he was timid ^c. He assumed the sovereignty, because he saw no competitor. On the other hand, it may be alledged, that he was unequal to the fatigues of empire by being old, and of a tender constitution: and that he came to the throne at a time when even the virtues of TITUS, and the abilities of AUGUSTUS, could scarce have restored the commonwealth to any great degree of glory. Under all these difficulties he must be allowed to have had his merits. He laid those outworks of liberty, which were afterwards fortified and compleated by TRAJAN; but he by no means appears so eminently perfect, as PLINY endeavours to represent him ^d. TACITUS is equally profuse in his praises: but TACITUS and PLINY both wrote in the reign of his adopted son. The immediate succession to DOMITIAN was an advantageous circumstance to NERVA, who had attained a most excellent reputation; so that

^a On the 18th of September, A. U. C. 848. In the consulship of C. FLAVIUS VALERUS, and C. ANTISTIVS VETUS.

^b Lib. 7. Ep. 27.

^c See the reply of MAURICIUS to NERVA's question concerning CATULLUS MESSALINUS. Book 4. Ep. 22.

^d *Vide Plinii panegyricum, passim.*

health after a plague, or plenty after a famine, could not have been more acceptable to the Romans.

PLINY ac-
cuses PUB.
CERTUS.

On NERVA's accession PLINY again entered upon the stage of public business. He was then at the age of five and thirty. He began by an impeachment in the senate of PUBLICIUS CERTUS, who had instigated DOMITIAN to put HELVIDIUS PRISCUS to death. The exact account of this accusation, given by PLINY in the thirteenth epistle of the ninth book, need not be anticipated here.

PLINY's
first wife
dies.

About this time PLINY lost his first wife, and by her death was no longer high-priest of TITUS^a.

In the eight hundred and forty ninth year of Rome M. ULPIDIUS TRAJANUS CRINITUS was adopted by the emperor. He was honoured with the title of CÆSAR, and the tribunitial power was conferred upon him. The consuls of the year were IMP. COCCIUS NERVA III. VERGINIUS RUFUS III. During his consulship, VERGINIUS RUFUS died. He is most pathetically lamented by PLINY in an epistle^b, that may be assigned, with great certainty, to this year. CORNELIUS TACITUS, the historian, was substituted consul in the room of VERGINIUS RUFUS, who was buried at the expence of the state. His funeral oration was spoken by TACITUS.

ARRIA, FANNIA, MAURICUS, and many others, who had been exiled by DOMITIAN, returned to Rome: but the happiness of PLINY seems to have been clouded this year by the voluntary death of CORELLIUS RUFUS, who in the sixty eighth year of his age put an end to his own life. The reflexions, in one of PLINY's letters, upon this catastrophe, are remarkably fine. I cannot forbear inserting them. *Est lucuosissimum genus mortis, quæ non ex natura, nec fatalis videtur. Nam utcunque in illis, qui morbo finiuntur,*

^a See observations on the 13th Epistle, Book 2.

^b Lib. 2. Ep. 1.

magnum ex ipsa necessitate solatium est; in iis vero, quos accessiva mors aufert, hic insanabilis dolor est, quod creduntur potuisse diu vivere^a. Suicide among us is generally called an act of cowardice. In a country, where the practice of it is so frequent, it cannot be too much condemned and vilified. It is certainly the most daring kind of murder; as preferring our own will to the will of God. Among the Romans suicide was no crime: they did not only look upon it as necessary, but honourable. PLINY has not mentioned in what manner CORELLIUS RUFUS killed himself. He attributes the cause of his death to the excessive tortures of the gout. Whenever he mentions CORELLIUS, he speaks of him with the highest veneration, and gives repeated instances of his regard to his memory, by the most generous acts of friendship to his surviving family^b.

On the twenty seventh of *January* NERVA died; NERVA died after reigning only one year, and some days above four months. Historians are not agreed in his exact age. DION CASSIUS says, he died in his sixty sixth year, but represents him as older in constitution than in years. All authors allow him to have been a good man, of a moderate, and a gentle disposition, and entirely free from vice. By birth he could not be called a Roman, being born in *Narnia*, in *Umbria*. His father, his grandfather, and his great grandfather, were all of consular dignity. He was twice consul; first with VESPASIAN, in the year eight hundred and twenty three; then again with DOMITIAN, in the year eight hundred and forty two. The family were originally of *Crete*.

TRAJAN, the first foreigner, was the fourteenth emperor of *Rome*; TRAJAN, the adopted son of NERVA, succeeded. Ἰόνος ὁ Τραιανός, ἢ οὐκ Ἰταλός, ἀδ' Ἰταλιότης ἦν. "TRAJAN, says DION, was neither a

^a Book 1. Ep. 12.

^b See Book 3. Ep. 3. Book 4. Ep. 17. Book 7. Ep. 11.

“ Roman, nor an Italian, he was a Spaniard.” When NERVA died, TRAJAN, who had been elected consul with the late emperor, was in *Germany*. He remained there some time. But you will find so many particulars of him in the tenth book of the epistles, that I need not expatiate upon the several actions of his reign, or mention more circumstances than are necessary to continue the annals of PLINY’s life.

PLINY’S
honours and
marriage in
the first year
of TRAJAN

In the first year of TRAJAN PLINY was constituted *præfectus ærarii Saturni*. In the same year, he married CALPURNIA, and obtained that great privilege among the Romans, the *jus trium liberorum*.

The third
general per-
secution of
the Christian
Church,

In the year eight hundred and fifty one, the consulship was refused by TRAJAN on account of his absence from *Rome*. SOSSIUS SENECIO and A. CORNELIUS PALMA were appointed consuls. This year was particularly remarkable for the general persecution of the Christian Church. PLINY continued in his office as *præfectus ærarii Saturni*. Towards the latter end of the year, TRAJAN, and his wife POMPEIA PLOTTINA, made their entry into *Rome*, with no other personal pomp, than the voluntary attendance of the people.

The cause of
the Africans
against MA-
RIUS PRIS-
CUS.

The consuls for the year eight hundred and fifty two were IMP. NERVA TRAJANUS III. and M. CORNELIUS FRONTO III. In the month of *January* the complaint of the Africans against MARIUS PRISCUS, their late proconsul, was heard in the senate. PLINY, in describing the solemnity of the debate, tells us, *Princeps præsidebat; erat enim consul*^b. Few of his descriptions relating to the civil government are more curious, than the account, that he gives of this cause, in which he appeared as an advocate for the Africans.

The epistles
of PLINY
written in
the year 852.

Within this year may be dated several of PLINY’s letters; particularly the eleventh and twelfth epistles

^a A. U. C. 850.

^b Lib. 2. Ep. 11.

of the second book, both treating of MARIUS PRISCUS; the fourth and ninth epistles of the third book, containing the accusation against CÆCILIUS CLASSICUS; the first and sixth epistles of the fourth book; the sixth and eighteenth epistles of the fifth book; the fifteenth, thirty sixth, and fortieth epistles of the ninth book, all treating of his journey into *Tuscany*, and his residence there. From an expression in one of his letters, we may ascertain these dates. *Cum publicum opus meâ pecuniâ inchoaturus in Thuscas excurrissem, accepto, ut præfectus ærarii, commeatu; legati provinciæ Beticæ questuri de proconsulatu CÆCILII CLASSICI advocatum me a senatu petierunt* ^a.

On the calends of *September* C. PLINIUS SECUNDUS and SP. CORNUTUS TERTULLUS, before they had completed their second year as prefects of the treasury, were appointed consuls ^b. Upon this occasion, PLINY spoke his panegyric in the senate, as the usual speech of thanks to the emperor for the honour of the consulship. He was three days in speaking it, *Nempe quam in senatu quoque, ubi perpeti necesse erat, gravari tamen vel puncto temporis solebamus, eandem nunc, et qui recitare, et qui audire triduo velint, inveniuntur* ^c.

PLINY and TERTULLUS appointed consuls.

Two poets of considerable reputation died this year, SILIUS ITALICUS, and MARTIAL. The former died rich, at one of his country seats near *Naples* ^d. The latter ended his life at *Bilbilis* in *Spain*.

The year concluded with the consulship of JULIUS FEROX, and ACUTIUS NERVA, who were chosen on the calends of *November*.

TRAJAN, in the year of *Rome* eight hundred and fifty three, began the Dacian war: he commanded

^a Lib. 3. Ep. 4. ^b *Nondum biennium compleramus in officio laboriosissimo et maximo, quum tu nobis, optime principum, fortissime imperatorum, consulatum obtulisti, ut ad summum honorem gloria celeritatis accederet. And again, Illud verò quàm insigne, quòd nobis præfæctis ærario consulatum antè quàm succëssorem dedisti?*

^c Lib. 3. Ep. 18.

^d *Plures iisdem in locis villas possidebat.* Lib. 3. Ep. 7.

his army in person, having been bred up, even from his infancy, to arms ^a.

PLINY goes to *Comum*, and to *Tiferinum Tiberinum*. The epistles written in the year 853.

While the emperor was in *Dacia*, PLINY visited *Comum*, and gave a large contribution towards erecting a public school there. He went afterwards into *Tuscany*, and was present at the dedication of a temple, which he had begun the preceding year at *Tiferinum Tiberinum*. Both these particulars may be deduced from the thirteenth epistle of the fourth book: to this year the date of that letter may be ascertained.

The last epistle of the fourth book may be also affixed to this year, as it describes to LICINIUS SURA an account of a spring near *Comum*, that ebbs and flows regularly three times in a day.

At PLINY'S return to *Rome* he was one of the advocates for JULIUS BASSUS, who was accused of evil administration during his proconsulship in *Bitbymia* ^b; so that in this year we may date the ninth epistle of the fourth book, which gives a very particular account of that cause.

In the following year ^c PLINY was an advocate for RUFUS VARENUS, who had succeeded BASSUS in the consulship of *Bitbymia*. The cause was respited till the emperor's return from *Dacia* ^d.

epistles written in year 854.

In this year may be dated the twentieth epistle of the fifth book, the fifth epistle of the sixth book, and the sixth epistle of the seventh book.

In the year eight hundred and fifty five TRAJAN entered into his fifth consulship. L. APPIUS MAXIMUS was his colleague. MAXIMUS had particularly signalized himself in the *Dacian* war. On

^a Vide panegyric. cap. 13 and 14.

^b A. U. C. 851.

^c A. U. C. 854.

^d The emperor returned in the year fifty five: and upon account of his successes over the Pannonians and the Dacians, a triumph was decreed to him. At the same time he was surnamed DACICUS.

the emperor's return from *Dacia*, PLINY met him at *Centumcella*, where TRAJAN had begun a most magnificent harbour. PLINY at Centumcella.

Soon afterwards PLINY was deputed with consular power, as lieutenant and proprætor of the provinces of *Bitbynia* and *Pontus*, and the republic of the Byzantines. He is sent to Bitbynia.

The letters of this year, which are not specified in the tenth book, are epistle the eighth of the fourth book, and epistle the thirty first of the sixth book: the former of which is a letter of thanks to ARRIVANUS for his congratulation on PLINY's promotion to the augurship: which office was become vacant by the death of SEXTUS JULIUS FRONTINUS, the particular friend of PLINY, and one of the emperor's chief favourites *.

When you read the tenth book, I hope you will think, that I have omitted no circumstance relating to PLINY during his residence in *Bitbynia* ^b. For that particular period, I refer you to the series of letters between him, and his imperial master. After his return into *Italy* few anecdotes of him are to be found. He seems, my CHARLES, to have passed the later scenes of his life in the manner I could wish to pass my own: In retirement, amidst his family and friends; at a distance from courts and senates; far withdrawn from noise and ostentation; happy amidst the sweets of rural ease and domestic pleasures: Few anecdotes to be found of him after his return.

“ The world forgetting, by the world forgot.”

Not above one or two of PLINY's epistles are evidential proofs of his return. In the tenth epistle of

* See his character in the observations on the 19th epistle of Book 9.

^b PLINY went into *Bitbynia* A. U. C. 855. He returned from thence A. U. C. 857.

the sixth book he mentions the tomb of VERGINIUS RUFUS, which, he says, was unfinished, although RUFUS had been dead ten years ^a. RUFUS died in the year of *Rome* eight hundred and forty nine, which fixes that epistle, and proves PLINY to have been alive in the year eight hundred and fifty nine ^b.

Perhaps we may date in the same year his epistle to CANINIUS ^c, whom he applauds for his intentions of writing a Greek poem on the Dacian war. TRAJAN's last triumph over the Dacians was in the year eight hundred and fifty eight; a year after PLINY's return from *Bithynia*: so that we may certainly fix the epistle to that, or the subsequent year.

The last traces of PLINY.

No other records are to be gathered of him from his own works. CASSIODORUS mentions him in the consulship of LUCIUS PUBLICIUS CELSUS II. and CLODIUS CRISPINUS ^d. His words are, *His consuli-bus, PLINIUS Secundus Novocomensis orator et historicus e insignis habetur, cujus ingenii plurima opera ex-stant*. If this authority may be depended upon, PLINY reached the fifty first, or fifty second year of his age: but how much longer he lived, or in what manner, or in what part of *Italy* he died, is entirely unknown.

It may not be improper now to speak of this translation, begun long ago, frequently laid aside, and interrupted. But as PLINY has ever been one of my favourite authors, I constantly resumed my task, not only with great pleasure, but with a particular satisfaction, in hopes of giving you, one day

^a *Subit indignatio cum miseratione: post decimum mortis annum reliquias, neglectumque cinerem sine titulo, sine nomine jacere, &c.*

^b PLINY was then in the forty sixth, or forty seventh year of his age.

^c Lib. 8. Ep. 4.

^d A. U. C. 864.

^e In the eighth epistle of the fifth book we shall find, that CAPITO, and several other friends of PLINY, had advised him to employ his thoughts in writing history; and, according to CASSIODORUS, he put the advice into execution.

or other, this public testimony of my affection. That time is come, and if the observations, which I have subjoined to each epistle, may prove to you of any use or entertainment, the utmost of my ambition is fully answered; since the work itself proceeds from no vain ostentation of learning, or restless thirst of fame. On the contrary, I esteem it but as a trifle; the amusement of my leisure hours; the offspring of winter evenings passed in the country; and the effect of that retirement and inactivity, from which I am scarce ever drawn, but with the utmost reluctance. May you move in a more distinguished sphere! or if you chuse the *otium*, be it *cum dignitate*; *etiam cum maxima*! superior to the pride of courts, equally superior to affected patriotism; not to be dazzled by immediate honours; not to be misguided by too distant prospects. Rise, my CHARLES, a right honest, preferably to a right honourable man. But private wishes, and paternal tenderness are growing upon me. Let us quit the theme, and let us return to my translation of PLINY.

You will find me often, perhaps too often, complaining of the order and disposition, in which PLINY'S letters are placed. The connexions between the epistles on the same subject are so entirely broken, that the beauty and instruction of the narrative are utterly destroyed. It is probable, that the whole collection is not come down to us: and we have great reason to regret, that not one epistle of any of his correspondents, TRAJAN excepted, has reached our times. Under these, and other disadvantages, the works of the younger PLINY have appeared. He is in a manner eclipsed by the greater name of CICERO; and the character of his uncle, the elder PLINY, by being more known, and more celebrated, has been of disadvantageous consequence to the nephew. Doctor MIDDLETON, in his life of TULLY, exerts himself with severity against the style, and writings

writings of our author. A blow from such a hand is of fatal consequence. HOMER tells us, that when NEPTUNE exerted his celestial power, when a deity interposed, even HECTOR was knocked down. We may suppose, that these heathen deities, like mortal men, were partial. They had their favourites, and, at any rate, those favourites were to be supported, so as to appear invulnerable, and almost immortal. But PLINY must not die, because CICERO must live. *Vivat uterque.* They were two illustrious Romans, each differently great.

If any future editor were to range PLINY's epistles in another disposition from that, in which they have hitherto been compiled, he might divide the nine first books into four classes: one of which might contain all the letters relating to the Roman senate, and the several laws and privileges at *Rome*, either hinted at, or more fully expatiated on in the epistles. A second class might comprehend all such letters, as treat upon oratory, style, translation, and the different manner of writing. The third might include the characters of particular persons, and the description of particular places. The fourth might be assigned not only to his letters of politeness, his family epistles, and the anecdotes of himself, but to the more trifling subjects, that have engaged his leisure hours. Among those ought to be inserted his poetical pieces, which are rather a blemish, than an honour to his character. This fourth division might possibly be the largest: but in it would appear such a fund of nobleness and generosity, as might well compensate the disappointment in sometimes finding him so far led astray from his dignity and serious manner of writing, that a poet would probably compare him to a silk worm, which, after having done an admirable and useful work, turns herself into a butterfly. But amidst all his trifles, he still maintains elegance and politeness; and amidst all his vanity, he never fails to illustrate,
 nay

LIFE of PLINY.

LXXV

nay even to magnify the accomplishments of his friends. Such a disposition, *nugis et vanitate non obstantibus*, is a strong instance of a most excellent heart.

I shall detain you no longer from the epistles themselves, than to assure you, that, whatever difficulty I have experienced in wording the translation, it is much more difficult to find expressions adequate to the paternal tenderness, with which I am, my dear CHARLES,

Your affectionate FATHER,

Leicester Fields,
Jan. 27, 1750-1.

and your first, and in truth

your faithfullest Friend

O R R E R Y.



PLINY'S EPISTLES.

BOOK I.

EPISTLE I.

PLINY to SEPTITIUS CLARUS.

YOU have often entreated me, to gather up those letters, which I have written with any degree of accuracy, and to give them to the public. I have obeyed your commands, without paying the least regard to the order of time, they not being designed as a history. I have placed them together, as they happened to come to my hands. I hope neither you will repent of your advice, nor I of my compliance; the consequence of which will be, that I must enquire for such of my letters, as are scattered abroad; and if I write any more hereafter, they shall certainly be published. Farewell.

OBSER-

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

OBSERVATIONS.

The first epistle, the introductory preface to all the rest, is a demonstration, that PLINY published his letters, not from any vain motion of his own heart, but at the repeated solicitation of SEPTITIUS. *Frequenter hortatus es*: "you have perpetually been pressing me." Certainly the rest of PLINY's friends joined in the same request, not so much perhaps with a view to the honour of the person, who wrote the letters, as to the honour of the persons, to whom they were written. There is an irresistible pride in being the favourite of a great and an eminent man. His smiles, like the beams of the sun, ripen and bring forward all, upon whom they shine: like the sun too, they often shine upon the good and bad without distinction; for it sometimes happens, that fancy, whim, indolence, or some worse cause, have so great a share, and are so unaccountably prevalent in the choice of friends and companions, that we see brave men insulted by cowards, wise men directed by fools, and honest men guided by knaves. But PLINY was governed neither by passion nor prejudice in the choice of his favourites. He judged with coolness and deliberation. He had obtained a thorough knowledge of the world. He was not only learned in books, but in men; a kind of learning more difficult and more useful even than philosophy.

Quæ adhuc neglectæ jacent requiram: "I must look after such letters, as have hitherto been neglected." This more literal construction may possibly convey the exacter meaning of our author. He alludes perhaps to letters, which he had long since thrown aside and neglected, but of which he had retained copies.

EPISTLE II.

PLINY to ARRIANUS.

SINCE I foresee your return will not be so soon as you proposed, I now send the book, which I promised you in some of my former letters. Use me as you have hitherto done; not only read my work, but correct it. I am more earnest in this request, because,

B O O K I.

cause, none of my works appear to me to have been written throughout, in the same style and manner: for I have endeavoured to imitate DEMOSTHENES, who was always your favourite, and CALVUS, who is lately become mine. However, my imitations are confined merely to the oratorical figures of their style; for the spirit of such men can be equalled only by those to whom the Gods have given an equal genius. The subject itself (excuse the arrogance of the expression) favoured such a kind of emulation. The whole difficulty lay in a certain vehemence of speech, which was very necessary to rouse a man, if I am to be roused, sunk by long disuse into lethargic indolence. However I did not avoid those gentler flowers of rhetoric, which our countryman TULLY so often makes use of, whenever such ornaments were seasonable, and did not carry me too much out of my way. My aim was to be sharp, not ill-natured.

Imagine not from hence, that I am bespeaking your favour. But, thus far I will confess, in hopes to provoke your criticisms, that my friends and I, if your approbation attends our partiality, shall make no difficulty to submit this piece to the world: for certainly something must be published, and I could wish it were this work, (you hear the wish of laziness) because it is ready: there are several reasons for publishing something; chiefly, as there is a great demand made for my writings, (although they have already lost the charm of novelty,) unless the bookfellers say so to flatter me. But if their flattery incites me to a closer pursuit of my studies, let them flatter on. Adieu.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

Works intended for the public should, like gold, be tried in the fire; if the metal is pure, it will come out shining and unhurt; if base, let it perish in the flames. But pride has so universal an ascendant over the minds of most men, and of authors in particular, that they chuse rather to fall

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

fall a sacrifice to public censure, than to enjoy the advantages of private advice. In conversation a man will expose his thoughts freely to his friends, and cautiously to his foes; but when he commits those faults to writing, and from thence to the press, he generally puts friends and enemies upon the same footing, consults neither the one nor the other, but appears at once to them both *with all his imperfections on his head*. This false conduct can arise only from vanity and self-conceit. In conversation a coxcomb may meet with adversaries ready and able to contest with him, but in writing he has the field to himself; no body can enter his closet, no body can stop his pen; he goes on in triumph, and he takes his rank accordingly in the temple of FAME. But the mind of PLINY is clear from these errors of presumption; he is devoid of pride and stiff opinion; he is desirous of instruction and advice, and is willing to receive all the assistance of his friends, especially of ARRIANUS, whose criticisms had probably been of benefit to him before. *Hunc rogo ex consuetudine tuâ, et legas et emendes*: "treat me with your usual friendship, read my work, and correct it."

The work, that PLINY hints at here, was an oration, which he was pressed to publish, in defence of ACCIA VARIOLA, a lady of great quality, of whom he speaks in the thirty third epistle of the sixth book. But he was dissident of this particular performance, because it was a new attempt. It was written in imitation of DEMOSTHENES, whose style and manner was full of fire and force. QUINTILIAN calls that celebrated Grecian, *longè princeps oratorum*: "the shining prince of orators," and he bears that character to this day.

SIDONIUS APOLLINARIS points out very justly the different characters of CICERO and DEMOSTHENES, where he says *irascitur ut DEMOSTHENES, persuadet ut TULLIUS*: "in his anger he is DEMOSTHENES, in his eloquence he is TULLY." The one drives rapidly, the other leads gently. The one bursts out like a torrent, in sound and vehemence; the other glides swiftly along like a beautiful stream, always clear and full, always strong and gentle. PLINY therefore shews a remarkable niceness of judgement, to mix the polished dialect of CICERO with the rougher energy of DEMOSTHENES, and like a skilful architect makes his building at once both of ornament and use.

CALVUS was an orator of the same turn and disposition with DEMOSTHENES; but TULLY is of opinion, that he wanted force; for speaking of him in a letter to TREBONIUS, he says, *multæ erant ei et reconditæ literæ, vis non erat*: "he had much and deep learning, but wanted energy:" but adds immediately after, *de judicio ejus valde existimavi bonè*: "I had the highest opinion of his judgment." It is impossible not to be curious after any man, whom PLINY honoured with his imitation; but time has cruelly swallowed up the orations of PLINY himself, the panegyric on TRAJAN excepted, and has devoured those of CALVUS likewise. All we can know of him is from those places, where he is now and then mentioned by different authors. AULUS GELLIUS, OVID, PROPERTIUS, and HORACE speak of him as a poet; but we must here view him in the light of an orator; and we shall find him often mentioned as such by TULLY, SENECA, and QUINTILIAN: the latter of whom speaks of his eloquence thus, *Est ei et sancta et gravis oratio, et castigata, et frequenter vehemens quoque. Imitator est autem Atticorum, fecitque illi properata mors injuriam, si quid adjecturus, non si quid detracturus fuit*: "His language is solemn, and weighty, chaste, and sometimes vehement. He imitated the Attic manner; and death could only do him an injury, if he designed to make additions, not if he intended to expunge any part of his works." In the *dialogus de oratoribus* vulgarly attributed to TACITUS, but generally thought to be QUINTILIAN'S, he is likewise spoken of, but not with so high a degree of reputation. Upon the whole CALVUS scarce appears in the first class of orators, but may rather be compared, as LONGINUS says of HYPERIDES, to a champion, who, though not chief in each of the five sorts of exercises singly, yet exceeded the common rate of wrestlers in them all together.

Ares enim esse, non tristes volebamus: "I would be sharp, not ill-natured:" or in the words of HAMLET, "let me speak daggers, but use none." Good nature, the characteristic of PLINY, may be seen in this sentence much to his honour. He was engaged in a cause, where the strongest invectives might not only have been justified, but were almost necessary. A lady of high rank, both by birth and marriage, had been cheated of her fortune by an old dotting father, who at fourscore tottered into the bands of matrimony, to the damage and dis-inheritance of his only child.

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

PLINY undertook her cause: it was heard in the courts of the *centumviri*, where he conquered in the most triumphant manner; but in his conquest shewed mercy, and in his triumph avoided cruelty. He was *acer*, but not *tristis*, and scorned to buy the greatest applause, by the least malevolence: he lashed the youthful inamorato, but spared the grey-headed father; remembering, that he was advocate for a daughter, whose filial piety, at the same time that it hindered her not from justice, debarred her from revenge.

Whatever else might be said on this occasion will come more proper under the thirty third epistle of the sixth book.

EPISTLE III.

PLINY to CANINIUS RUFUS.

TELL me what are you doing at Comum; Comum equally the object of our delight! Tell me some news of that enchanting villa; of the gallery, where it is always spring; of the plane trees, which spread themselves most diffusively; of the green enamelled banks of your canal; of your lake situated for pleasure and for use; of your place for exercise, the ground of which is soft, and yet solid; of your bath open to the sun on every side; of your various dining rooms, suited to a larger or lesser company; of your bed-chambers made for repose both by day and night. Say, are you wholly engaged by these beauties, and do they share you by turns? or are you called from them, as usual, by frequent excursions to your family affairs? If these beauties entirely possess you, then is your happiness complete: but if not, then are you one of many in the same miserable situation. Come, my friend, it is high time, leave low and sordid cares to others: and apply your mind entirely to your studies in the deep recess of such an undisturbed retreat: let this be your business and your recreation; your labour and your rest; the object of your waking thoughts and
of

BOOK I.

of your dreams. Plan out and compose some work, that may ever belong to you: for your other possessions will frequently change masters, but this will be always your own. I know the soul I exhort, I know the genius I speak to. Let me see you endeavour to appear as great in your own eye, as you certainly will in the eye of others, when once you become conscious of your own abilities. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

Whoever has a desire to learn the art of praising without insincerity, of obliging without meanness, and of delighting the passions, without flattering the vices, will find that art in this letter. Our author inculpates himself into his friend, by touching elegantly upon every particular beauty belonging to the country seat of RUFUS. He begins his letter with a set of questions, that are so many pictures of the place. They are drawn in miniature, and shew exquisite skill in the painter: the invention is nice, the expression delicate, and the colouring agreeable to the whole. The observations, that are made in consequence of such originals, may be looked upon as frames, which are intended as ornamental additions to pieces of infinite more value than the frames themselves.

In the territories of Comum lived CANINIUS, and in the city of Comum PLINY was born; and though it is scarce possible not to have a partiality for our birth place, be it where it will, yet PLINY shews his passion for Comum to arise only for the beauty of the situation, the temperature of the air, and the various and elegant improvements made there by CANINIUS. He calls it *suburbanum amœnissimum*: "a villa filled with charms:" nor can imagination form a more delightful place, than the open gallery, which he speaks of, *verna semper*: "where it was perpetual spring."

The next enquiry he makes is after a shady grove of plane trees: *Quid Platanus? spacissimus?* The plane tree was in high esteem amongst the antients, as we may learn from Mr. EVELYN, whose stile is particular, but whose account is curious.

"Platanus (says he) that so beautiful and precious tree, so doated on by XERXES, that ÆLIAN and other authors

“ tell us, he made halt, and stopt his prodigious army of
 “ seventeen hundred thousand soldiers, which even covered
 “ the sea, exhaulted rivers, and thrust mount Athos from
 “ the continent, to admire the *pulchritude* and *procerity* of
 “ one of these goodly trees, and became so fond of it, that
 “ *spoiling both himself, his concubines, and great persons,* of
 “ all their jewels, he covered it with gold, gems, neck-
 “ laces, scarfs, and bracelets, and infinite riches : *in sum*
 “ was so enamoured of it, that for some days, neither the
 “ concernment of his grand expedition, nor interest of ho-
 “ nour, nor the necessary motion of his portentous army
 “ could persuade him from it. He styled it his minion, his
 “ mistress, his goddess : and when he was forced to part
 “ from it, he caused the figure of it to be stamped in a
 “ medal of gold, which he continually wore about him.
 “ Wherever they built their sumptuous and magnificent
 “ colleges for the exercise of youth in *gymnastics*, as riding,
 “ shooting, wrestling, running, &c. (*like our French academies*)
 “ and where the graver philosophers also met to converse
 “ together and improve their studies, betwixt the *xysta* and
 “ *subdiales ambulationes*, (which were porticos open to the
 “ air,) they planted groves and walks of platans to refresh
 “ and shade the *palæstræ*, as you have them described by
 “ VITRUVIUS, lib. 5. cap. 11. and as CLAUDIUS PER-
 “ RAULT has assisted the text with a figure or *ichnographical*
 “ *plot*. These trees the Romans first brought out of the
 “ *Levant*, and cultivated with so much industry and cost,
 “ for their stately and proud head only, that great orators
 “ and statesmen, CICERO and HORTENSIVS, would ex-
 “ change now and then a turn at the bar, that they might
 “ have the pleasure to step to their villas, and refresh their
 “ *platans*, which they would often *irrigate* with wine, in-
 “ stead of water, and so prized the very shadow of it, that
 “ when afterwards they transplanted them to *France*, they
 “ exacted a tribute of any of the natives, who should pre-
 “ sume but to put his head under it. PLINY tells us, there is
 “ no tree whatsoever, which so well defends us from the
 “ heat of summer, nor that admits it more kindly in winter ;
 “ and for our encouragement, I do upon experience assure
 “ you, that they will flourish and abide, without any more
 “ trouble, than frequent and plentiful watering, which from
 “ their youth they excessively delight in, and gratefully
 “ acknowledge by their growth accordingly.”

Quid

Quid Euripus viridis et gemmeus? “The green enamelled banks of your canal.” The *Euripi* were open aqueducts, which could be filled or emptied at pleasure. They derived their name from a narrow sea between *Eubœa* and *Bœotia*, that ebbs and flows seven times in four and twenty hours. They were made with great art, and when they were not filled with water, the bottom appeared green, and the banks adorned with flowers. The *Circus* at *Rome*, where the sea-fights were represented, was supplied in the same manner by canals called *Euripi*. When the *Naumachiæ* were exhibited, the *Circus* was filled with water from the *Euripi*, which latter then remained dry; but when the naval sports were ended, the water was turned back again into the *Euripi*, and the bottom of the *Circus* remained dry. But the expression *viridis et gemmeus* may possibly bear another signification. The *gemmeus* might be owing to the refraction of the rays of light through the transparent stream, which made it appear like a diamond with a clear water; and the bottom of it was the foil: if so, this could happen only when it was full, and in a proper motion, which diversified and scattered the rays more.

The philosophy of it stands thus. The rays of light, passing through any medium, are refracted according to the density and transparency of it; on which account all pellucid gems have a lustre in proportion to their density. For this reason, the rays of light reflected from a solid surface, and refracted through the water, will give a lustre like a gem, and are collected, when the basin is full, into a brighter focus, than they can be from reflexion only, when the basin is empty, in the different proportion, which water bears to air, which is as eight hundred and fifty to one.

Quid subjectus et serviens lacus? “Your lake situated for pleasure and for use.” We may judge from this question, that the lake was at some distance from the house, far enough to afford an agreeable prospect, and near enough to serve all the uses of the family. The *Euripus* probably fell into it, and the grove of *Platans* surrounded the borders: so that if we take the whole together, it seems to answer the place, to which Mr. DRYDEN conducts his fool of nature.

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

Where in a plain defended by a wood
 Crept through the matted grass a crystal flood,
 By which an alabaſter fountain flood.

Quid illa mollis et tamen ſolida geſtatio? “Your riding place, the ground of which is ſo ſoft, and yet ſo firm.” The Romans were fond of exerciſe, and were ſenſible, how conducive it was to health: they took care to have at their country ſeats a covered place, or houſe, in which they could either ride on horſeback, or be carried in a chariot, whenever the extremity of weather put a ſtop to all exerciſe abroad. This was called *geſtatio*, and had ſo far a reſemblance to the riding houſes of theſe days, that it was built up, and cloſed on both ſides, to keep out the ſun in ſummer, and the rain in winter.

An, ut ſolebas, intentione rei familiaris obeunda, crebris excuſationibus avocaris? “Are you, as uſual, perpetually interrupted by the avocation of family employments?” PLINY is very apprehenſive, that the private affairs of CANINIUS, of whoſe genius and capacity he has the higheſt opinion, may divert him from the enjoyment of his ſtudies: he therefore adviſes his friend to quit all buſineſs; and to ſet about ſome work of immortality. Which reminds us of what HORACE ſays upon this head to JULIUS FLORUS:

Nec tibi partum

*Ingenium, non incultum eſt, nec turpiter birtum,
 Sed linguam cauſis acuis, ſeu civica jura
 Reſpondere paras, ſeu condis amabile carmen,
 Prima ferēs ederæ victivis præmia. Quod ſi
 Frigida curarum fomenta relinquere poſſes;
 Quo te cæleſtis ſapientia duceret, ires.
 Hæc opus, hoc ſtudium parvi properemus et ampli,
 Si patriæ volumus, ſi nobis vivere cari.*

Nor ſmall, nor rude, the genius you may boaſt,
 Nor is it, like the roſe, ’midſt brambles loſt.
 If thy keen tongue defends our country’s rights,
 Or gentler verſe thy vacant muſe indites,
 Whate’er thy eloquence, whate’er thy ſong,
 To thee the triumphs and the wreaths belong:

But

B O O K I.

But could the seeds of dull and fruitless care
Desert thy breast, nor trifles enter there,
Wisdom would point to happiness the road,
Nor couldst thou fail to follow where she trod.
By arts like these, his actions still must move,
Who seeks his own content, or country's love.

PLINY had certainly his eye to this passage in *Horace*, when he writ to *CASINIUS*; or at least we may assure ourselves, that where these two authors agree in one and the same thought, it must be excellent, and like true gold, perfectly sterling, whatever image be stamped upon it.

E P I S T L E IV.

PLINY to POMPEIA CELERINA, *his mother in law.*

FROM among all my letters, (for I need not now refer to any of yours) I fix upon my last; though it is short and of an old date; to convince you, how much I am captivated with the vast affluence of beauties in your several country houses at *Oriculum*, *Narnium*, *Carfulanum*, and at your favourite *Perusinum*; but particularly at *Narnium*, where you have a bath.

I have the happiness to find, that what I look upon as my own; is not so much mine; as what is really yours. The only difference is, that your servants are more careful of me, and are more busy about me, than my own. The same thing may happen to you, if you will come so far out of your road, as to honour us with a visit. It is a journey I wish I could induce you to; first, that you may enjoy what is ours; as fully as we have enjoyed what is yours; and next, that my servants, who wait upon me with an indolence, that almost amounts to neglect, may upon your arrival exert themselves as they ought. Believe me, indulgence to domestics gives them a habit of laying

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

afide all respect towards their masters. New objects invite them to their duty, and they chuse to recommend themselves rather by their diligence to others, than their attendance upon us. Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

No picture can give greater delight to the mind, than one, where domestic happiness is drawn in full beauty; where friendship, cheerfulness, and all the social virtues appear in their just attitude; where plenty and œconomy are joined hand in hand; and where generosity sits smiling at her own gifts. Such a picture is this epistle; it is written to POMPEIA CELERINA, the mother of PLINY'S first wife. CELERINA had carried him to her several country houses, where she had entertained him in the most polite manner; in a manner suitable to his own taste and disposition. He found himself more at ease with her than at his own house: her servants attended him, her baths refreshed him, her daughter was the object of his love; and to form a just idea of CELERINA herself, we need only remember, that she had chosen PLINY for her son in law, and when he was so, knew how to entertain him. Let us now take a view of her different country houses.

Otriculum was a town in the *Apennine* lying upon the *Flaminian* way, just below the place, where the *Nar* falls into the *Tiber*. The territory about it was called *Otricianum*, in the same manner, as our shires take their names generally from the chief city in the county; and the inhabitants at this day are called *Otricoli*. Mr. ADDISON in his travels speaks of a ruined castle in this place, which might possibly have been the country seat of CELERINA.

In that neighbourhood, at about twelve miles distance, stood *Narnium*, the original name of which was *Nequinum*. It was besieged by the Romans under the consulship of APULIUS; and LIVY says, it was so situated amidst rocks and inaccessible mountains, that had not the city been betrayed by two of her own citizens, neither force nor stratagem could have taken it. The Romans gave it the name of *Narnia* from the river *Narnia* (now called *le Negra*, or the *Nar*) which runs at the foot of these mountains. This

* Liv. Lib. x. cap. 1x. & x.

must have been a very fine situation, and perhaps not unlike that of *Windsor-Castle*, where from a great height we command a most extensive view, and at the bottom flows one of the finest rivers in the world.

Carfulanum lies in the direct road from *Narnium* to *Perusinum*. The town itself is now quite destroyed, and only a small inn remains upon the spot, which in remembrance of the city is called *Carfula*.

The modern Italian name of *Perusinum* is *Perugia*: at this place LUCIUS, the brother of MARK ANTONY, was reduced to great extremity, when he fled from OCTAVIUS CÆSAR, as we learn from FLORUS: "*Hunc vero [ANTONII fratrem] jam non privatis, sed totis senatus suffragiis judicatum hostem CÆSAR aggressus, intra Perusie muros redigit, compulsi que ad extrema deditionis, turpi et nihil non experta fame:*" But CÆSAR having attacked him (the brother of "ANTONY) who not only by private suffrages, but by the "votes of the whole senate, was an adjudged enemy, drove "him within the walls of *Perusia*, and reduced him to all "the extremities of a surrender by a famine, that made "him feel every base and sad variety of wretchedness."

Our author discovers throughout this epistle that sweetness of nature, which rendered him so amiable to the age he lived in, and made his character so shining to succeeding times. It is very certain, the good-natured master is often less carefully attended, although much better beloved, than the ill-natured tyrant; mildness and indulgence to servants seldom meeting with those returns of duty and gratitude, which might be expected. But PLINY could generously lay aside the expectation of receiving any acknowledgment, for the inward satisfaction of having deserved it.

a L. Flori. Lib. iv. cap. v.

E P I S T L E V.

PLINY to VOCONIUS ROMANUS.

D ID you ever see a more dastardly or mean spirited wretch than MARCUS REGULUS, since the death of DOMITIAN? during whose reign his enormities were not less than under NERO's, but they were

were acted more covertly. He began to be afraid, that I was angry with him; nor did he judge wrong, for I really was angry. He was not only principally concerned in the destruction of RUSTICUS ARULENUS, but he had insulted him after death, by repeating and publishing a certain book, in which he railed against RUSTICUS, and called him the *ape of the Stoics*: and further added, that he was branded with the *Vitellian scar*. You are well acquainted with the eloquence of REGULUS. He was one day roaring so intemperately against HERENNIUS SENECIO, that even METIUS CARUS said to him, *Pray what have you to do with my dead men? Do I meddle with CRASSUS or CAMBRINUS?* both whom REGULUS had accused in NERO'S reign. REGULUS imagined, that I took these things ill; and therefore when he rehearsed his book, I was not invited. Besides, he remembered what a thrust he aimed at me before the *centumviri*. At the request of ARULENUS RUSTICUS, I was engaged there in the cause of TIMON'S wife ARIONILLA. REGULUS was on the other side. In one part of the cause we, on our side, relied upon a particular judgement given by METIUS MODESTUS, a man of infinite worth, but who at that time was sent into exile by DOMITIAN. Here you will see REGULUS. PLINY, says he, *I desire to know your real opinion of MODESTUS?* You perceive my danger, if I had answered, I thought him innocent; and my shame, if I had answered otherwise. I verily think I may say the Gods inspired me upon the occasion. I replied, *I will give you my opinion, if his case is now to come in judgement before the centumviri.* Well, rejoined he, *but pray tell us, what are your real sentiments of MODESTUS?* It is usual, answered I, *to examine witnesses only against the accused, and not against the condemned.* He then began a third time, *Come I quit all other questions about MODESTUS; but tell us your opinion of his loyalty? You see me, said I, my opinion; but I cannot think it so much*

B O O K I.

much as lawful to ask the question, where the person is already condemned. Here he held his peace, and I was praised and congratulated for neither hurting my character, by what might have been an advantageous, but an unjust answer, nor falling into the snare of so insidious a question. Struck in his conscience with his behaviour towards me, he first applies himself to CÆCILIUS CELER, and afterwards to FABIVS JUSTVS, that they might reconcile me to him. Nor content with that, he comes to SPURINNA; *I beseech you,* says he in the humblest manner, (for when he is frightened, he appears the most abject creature imaginable) *to go early to PLINY'S house; but go as early as possible, for I am no longer able to bear this uneasiness; and by any means contrive, that he be no longer angry with me.* I was early awake: in the morning arrives a messenger from SPURINNA, to tell me, SPURINNA was just coming to me: *No,* says I, *I will wait upon him.* We both met in LIVIA'S porch, as we were going to each other. He delivered the message sent by REGULUS, and added his own entreaties to induce me to forgive him, which was acting a part of the highest good-nature to the worst natured man alive. *You yourself shall judge,* replied I, *what my present situation allows me to say to REGULUS: towards you it is fit I shall have no reserve: but I expect MAURICUS, (for MAURICUS was not yet returned from banishment) and therefore cannot give a positive answer, either as to my consent, or refusal, being determined to act as he shall direct; for in this affair it becomes him to lead the way, and me to accompany him.*

Not many days after, REGULUS met me in the prætor's office, and there, after pursuing me some time, he begged one word in private. He began by saying, that he was afraid I had retained some inward disgust towards him, from what he had let drop once in the court of the *centumviri*, when he was engaged in a cause against SATRIUS RUFUS and me; his words

were,

were, "Satrius and a certain person, who vies
 "with Cicero, and who scorns the eloquence of the
 "present age." I told him, that I now found he
 had said a thing maliciously, according to his own
 confession, which I might otherwise have construed as
 a compliment; for, added I, *it is true, and I own
 it that I emulate Cicero; and it is as true, that I
 cannot relish the eloquence of the present age: I hold it
 the height of folly not to copy after the best originals.
 But since you can remember so well what passed in that
 cause, pray why do you forget another, in which you
 asked me, what my opinion was of the loyalty of Mo-
 destus?* Pale as he is by nature, he now grew ten
 times paler, and with a faltering voice replied, *The
 question I asked, was not aimed at you, but at Modestus.*
 Observe the cruel temper of the man, who
 frankly owned, that he had endeavoured to wound a
 person already in banishment. His reason for it was
 extraordinary; he said, that in a letter, which was
 read to Domitian, Modestus had made use of this
 expression; "Regulus is the greatest brute, that
 "walks upon two legs:" it is true Modestus had
 written these very words. Here I think our discourse
 ended; nor indeed had I a mind to continue it any
 longer, that I might keep myself quite free from all
 engagements, till Mauricus came from banishment.

You must not imagine from hence, that I am ignorant, how difficult it is to overturn Regulus. He is rich and powerful; he is respected by many; he is feared by more, and fear is generally stronger than love. Nevertheless, it is possible, that such a strong building may be reduced to the ground. For the kindness of bad men is uncertain, like themselves.

But to repeat what I said before, I stay for Mauricus: He is a man of weight, of prudence, and knowledge of the world; one who, by past experience, can measure future events: Under his authority, let me do what I will, either in carrying on my resentment,

ment, or burying it in oblivion, I am sure to have reason on my side. I have writ these things to you, because, from the mutual friendship between us, it is proper you should not only know my words and actions, but also all my designs. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This epistle to VOCONIUS ROMANUS, whose character^a we shall see fully drawn by PLINY himself hereafter, seems to have been written at the beginning of TRAJAN's reign; at a time, when PLINY was rising into favour, and had not yet arrived at the meridian of his power: otherwise he could scarce have found the least difficulty in overturning REGULUS; although he appears, by this letter, to have been one of the many worthless sons of fortune, who wallow in riches, and abound with the outward appearance of followers and friends. Another reason gives room for this conjecture; MAURICUS had been banished by DOMITIAN, and was not yet returned, although recalled by NERVA. MAURICUS was brother to RUSTICUS ARULENUS, who was put to death in the reign of DOMITIAN; and the panegyric, which he had writ in honour and defence of PÆTUS THRASEA was ordered to be burnt. MARCUS REGULUS had an insuperable aversion to RUSTICUS (that aversion, which villains constantly retain against honest men) and was the secret instrument of his destruction; but having drawn so much popular odium upon himself in the time of NERO, by his barefaced and cruel prosecution of CRASSUS and ORPHITUS, he was now resolved to proceed with more caution and hypocrisy, and, like an experienced statesman, to deal forth his slaughter from behind the skreen. Sacred CÆSAR therefore was the butcher, and REGULUS only provided a knife for the execution. CÆSAR could do no wrong; therefore REGULUS was safe: CÆSAR * * * * but let us hasten to the account, which TACITUS gives of this Arulenian tragedy.

^b *Legimus cum ARULENO RUSTICO PÆTUS THRASEA, HERENNIO SENECONI PRISCUS HELVIDIUS laudati essent.*

^a Book the second, Epistle the thirteenth.

^b Corn. Tacit. vita Agricolaæ.

capitale fuisse: neque in ipsos modo auctores, sed in libros quoque eorum servitum, delegato triumviris ministerio, ut monumenta clarissimorum ingeniorum in comitio ac foro urerentur. Scilicet illo igne vocem populi Romani et libertatem senatus, et conscientiam generis humani aboleri arbitrabantur, expulsis insuper sapientiæ professoribus, atque omni bona arte in exsilium acta, ne quid usquam honestum occurreret. Deditur profecto grande patientiæ documentum; et sicut vetus ætas vidit, quid ultimum in libertate esset, ita nos quid in servitute, adempto perquisitiones et loquendi audiendique commercio. Memoriam quoque ipsam cum voce perdidissemus, si tam in nostrâ potestate esset oblivisci, quam tacere.

“ Our history says, that ARULENUS RUSTICUS and HERENNIUS SENECA were put to death for celebrating the praises of PÆTUS THRASEA, and PRISCUS HELVIDIUS. This cruelty was not only extended against the authors themselves, but also against their writings: the execution was to be performed by the triumviri, who had orders to burn in the forum, and at the town-hall, the works and last remains of those great and glorious men. In this fire they undoubtedly imagined they should be able to consume and abolish the voice of the Roman people, the liberty of the senate, and even every idea of human kind. The philosophers had been expelled the city beforehand; arts and sciences had been driven into banishment; and this was done, that not the least remains of virtue should be met with in any place. Here we gave a noble example of our patience, who, because our fathers had seen the height of liberty, were resolved to try the depth of slavery; all communication both of speaking and hearing being taken away by the inquisitions of the state: and we should even have lost the memory as well as the voice of complaint, if it had been equally in our power to forget as to be silent.”

What a representation is here of Roman servitude! what a scene of inhumanity on one hand, and of slavish infatuation on the other!

The first step towards the establishment of tyranny is the destruction of virtue, knowledge, the sciences, and the arts. Liberty is a tree, that receives nourishment from those roots, and to them therefore the ax must first be applied; otherwise, though the body be cut down, and the spreading branches lie rotting on the ground, some degree of vegetation

tion will still remain, and a young plant may arise, to shade and defend all, who are either able or willing to serve their country. Ministers of arbitrary power act according to this system: they begin by burning and suppressing all kinds of literature in general, but in particular such books and papers, as tend either to explain or establish that freedom, to which every man has a right by the law of nature, and which he ought to give up only with his latest breath. This is a right indeed, which obstructs, and breaks in upon the systems, that are constantly pursued by the *Reguli* of the age: for which reason they spare no endeavours to take it away from mankind, whom they would deprive of all knowledge, and sense of liberty, because the first buddings of slavery must sprout up amidst the woods of ignorance and sloth. But wise men cannot be deceived; they will not be lulled into bondage, or cajoled into chains; they are ever awake for the public good; and the glorious cause, in which they are engaged, inspires them with a firmness and intrepidity, unknown to the abettors of tyranny. The characters of *HERENNIUS SENECIO* and *ARULENUS RUSTICUS* answer the ideas, which we must naturally conceive of wise and able men. These two Romans, when alive, were dreaded by *REGULUS*; when dead, were odious to him: his malice reached beyond the grave; he hated virtue even on the other side of *Stryx*; and was so intemperate in his reflexions on *SENECIO* after his death, that he drew a reprimand upon himself from *METIUS CARUS*, another instrument of iniquity, who assumed the sole right of flandering all those persons, whose murders he had perpetrated without a copartner.

There is one observation, which must certainly occur upon the perusal of this letter: the natural tempers of *PLINY* and *REGULUS* appear so widely different, that it was impossible they should ever agree, or be thoroughly reconciled.

PLINY was a man of the utmost sweetness and candour of heart; he was tender and benevolent; wise and unreserved; free from design, and without guile; constant and steady to his friends, calm and not vindictive to his enemies; dutiful to his prince, and faithful to his country; or, to sum up all, abhorred by *DOMITIAN*; employed, honoured, and entrusted by *TRAJAN*.

REGULUS

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

REGULUS was of a narrow timorous nature: he was filled with that vicious kind of ambition, which cannot be satisfied without the destruction of whatever stands in the way; he was dark and bloody; suspicious and designing; and, as he knew not how to be beloved, all he could attempt was to be feared. His tongue, like an adder, was poisonous and deadly to mankind: *his throat was an open sepulchre*, gaping wide to receive the dead; loyalty was ever in his mouth, but never in his heart; or, if he was loyal, it was only to such tyrants as NERO and DOMITIAN.

REGULUS easily discerned, that, in the reign of TRAJAN, PLINY was likely to be honoured and distinguished; the subtle REGULUS made it part of his religion to worship the first dawns of greatness, wherever they appeared; he therefore applied himself immediately to SPURINNA and other common friends, that they might intercede and endeavour to perfect a reconciliation: after their intercessions, he tried what effect his own rhetoric, and submission might have: but PLINY was armed with a shield against all attacks. He waited for the brother of the unfortunate person, who had been put to death; and was obliged in friendship and equity not to shew any countenance to the prosecutor of RUSTICUS, till MAURICUS came back; *illum enim esse hujus consilii ducem, me comitem decet*: “for, says PLINY, he should “be the leader, and I only his companion.”

There are two remarkable points in this epistle, that frequently occur in the daily commerce of life. The first is, guilt occasions a man to discover something he would chuse to hide, and wishes unsaid: the other is, ill-nature generally drives a man beyond his mark, and makes him say something, tending rather to the honour, than the prejudice of the person, whom he strives to injure. Of the former, what can be a plainer instance, than where REGULUS confesses in particular, from the self-consciousness of having abused and vilified PLINY in general, that he had attacked him, together with Satrius Rufus, in a sarcastical insinuation with regard to their judgements? which sarcasm, unless discovered by a voluntary confession, might have passed as a genteel compliment, although intended as an audacious sneer. Of the latter, the reproach of *the Vitellian scar* is a demonstration, that the malice of the heart often carries the policy of the head beyond the bounds of true artifice. The occasion of that scar happened in the civil wars
between

between VITELLIUS and VESPASIAN; wars, which though of no long continuance, were very bloody. RUSTICUS, who was then prætor, had been sent ambassador to PETILIUS CEREALIS, to treat upon terms of peace, from VITELLIUS, and the senate of Rome; but the soldiers of PETILIUS stubbornly rejected all offers of accommodation, and went so far in their rage, as to wound the ambassador, to kill one of his lictors, and to drive away his followers. This was universally looked upon as an infringement on the privilege of an embassy, and a manifest violation of the law of nations; “and the action, says TACITUS, was held in greater abhorrence, because ARULENUS RUSTICUS, besides the sacred character of a prætor and ambassador, was a man greatly admired and esteemed.”

It is most probable, that ARULENUS RUSTICUS received his wound in the midst of the popular fury, when he was utterly defenceless, his chief lictor murdered, and his whole train of attendants dispersed. In such a situation the bravest man must have endeavoured to save himself by flight. But REGULUS wanted sufficient candour to distinguish between a flight of necessity, and a flight of cowardice: his malice would have imputed to fear an action, which was the effect of prudence, and for which RUSTICUS was rather to be commended, than to be blamed.

Potest tamen fieri, ut hæc concessa labantur, nam gratia malorum tam infida est quam ipsi: “But these advantages perhaps may be subject to a shock, and become unsettled; for the regards of bad men are as faithless as their natures.”

An idol of a faction, when kept up by party, may compare himself to a man, who is tossed in a blanket: whilst he is at the highest pitch, he affords greatest pleasure to those who hold the coverlet, and whenever he comes near the ground, they throw him up again with exultations; till growing weary of their office, they maliciously let their burthen fall, and then perhaps either his neck is dislocated, or some of his bones are broken. PLINY knew, that the props, which supported the wealthy and powerful MARCUS REGULUS, were in themselves rotten and unsound: he thought it best therefore to begin by making them totter; and of consequence the edifice, which they sustained, must immediately tumble down. It is an observation, that holds good to this day, and will to the end of the world, that the *gratia malorum* is as uncertain, as the sea.

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

Subdola cum ridet placidi pellacia ponti *.

“ The harlot sea our easy faith beguiles,
“ And threatens danger most, when most she smiles.”

Where there is no virtue, there can be no steadiness. Men, who have nothing but self-interest in view, follow the power, and not the person: it is equal to them who guides the reins of empire, a PLINY or a REGULUS.

* Lucretii, Lib. 2. v. 559.

EPISTLE VI.

PLINY to CORNELIUS TACITUS.

YOU will laugh, and well you may. Your friend, your PLINY, the man you know so well, even I, have taken three swinging boars. PLINY! say you: Yes, PLINY, the individual PLINY; without any great interruption either of my indolence or of my studies. The nets were spread, and I sat down close to them; but instead of boarpear, or javelin, I was armed with my pencil and my pocket-book. I first formed my thoughts, and then I writ them down, being resolved to return with my table-books full, although my hands should be empty. Despise not this method of study. It is surprising, how much the exercise of the body contributes to the alacrity of the mind. On every side of you are woods and wildernesses; which, together with the silence that constantly attends this diversion, are powerful incitements to study and reflexion. Therefore (take it from my authority,) when you go next a hunting, carry not only your bread-basket, and your leathern bottle, but your writing tables also; and you will find the mountains are not more inhabited by DIANA than by MINERVA. Farewell.

OBSER-

OBSERVATIONS.

If a thorough-bred fox-hunter should read the curious narrative contained in this epistle, he would immediately conclude, that our author had not the least degree of spirit, or taste in field diversions. Books, and pen and ink, are against the very essence of hunting. MINERVA has no more business in the woods, than DIANA has in the closet. But PLINY resolved not to desert his studies, even upon the most pressing temptations; he went out, rather because he was in the country, than because he had any delight in the sport; and knowing life to be short, he was determined not to squander away any part of it unimproved, or in absolute amusement.

The fages of antiquity were rather poachers than sportsmen: they had no kind of delicacy in the music of the hounds, or the composition of the pack. They had no ear; deepness, loudness, or sweetness of cry, were undistinguished, and disregarded by the Greeks and Romans. Their dependance was upon their nets, more than upon their dogs: and the silence, which PLINY hints at in this letter, proceeded from superstition, not from thought; for ^b SCALIGER expressly says, *Neutiquam faustum putamus in venatu loqui*: "It is reckon'd an ill omen to speak in hunting." And ^c XENOPHON tells us, that the antients, in their method of boar-hunting made use of several insidious stratagems, to draw the furious beast into certain traps called *tendiculae*, where immediately they put an end to his life by dogs, javelins, and hunting-spears. Thus he fell like CÆSAR; overcome by numbers, and subdued by traitors.

It is observable, that the antients knew nothing of the proper dress for hunting. They were entirely ignorant of the velvet cap, the jockey boots, the snaffle bridle, the black cravat, the green coat, and those other ornaments, which set off and distinguish a true sportsman. When PLINY hunted, he was dressed like a capuchin; his gown, by way of cowl, was pulled over his head; he thought jingling couples too noisy to hang dangling by his side, nor were the names and figures of his dogs engraved upon his but-

^b Jus. Cæs. Scaliger poetices, lib. 1. pastoralia, cap. 4.

^c Xenoph. Kory.

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tons : his belt was neither laced nor embroidered, nor was his hair tucked up with a comb : his outward garb, like his inward disposition, was the habit of a philosopher.

How different are the venatorial games exercised by the heroes of our days ! They court death, they are in love with danger, and they undergo the utmost fatigue, merely for the honour of breaking their own necks ;

*Ne quisquam Ajacem possit superare nisi Ajax.**

“ Our huntsman scorns to die the common way ;
“ None but the 'squire, the 'squire himself shall slay.”

* Ovid Metamorph. Lib. 13. v. 390.

° Their sports, their courage, and their labours, are finely described by Mr. SOMERVILLE, in his poem called *the Chase*.

EPISTLE VII.

PLINY to OCTAVIUS RUFUS.

SEE to what an eminence you have exalted me, by giving me the same power and dominion, that HOMER gives to the great and mighty Jove :

Great Jove consents to half the chief's request,
But Heaven's eternal doom denies the rest †.

In the same manner, I can deny half, and grant the other half of what you desire : for as it becomes me, since you make it your request, to refuse the inhabitants of *Andalusia* my assistance against one particular man ; so on the other hand, I cannot think it consistent with my honour, and that steadiness, which you have ever approved of in me, to appear against a province, which I have formerly obliged by many good offices, and not without pains and hazard to myself. I will keep therefore this medium ; out of your two requests, since you absolutely insist that

† POPE'S Homer, Book 16. Line 306.

I grant

I grant one, I will chuse that, which may not only satisfy your wishes, but will be most agreeable to your judgement ; because I am not so much to consider, how a man, excellent as you are, may be pleased with my behaviour merely on this occasion, as how to gain and secure your approbation for ever. I hope to be at *Rome* about the middle of *October*, where I shall confirm to *GALLUS*, in person, what I have here promised ; for the performance of which, I shall engage your word as well as my own. In the mean time, you may answer for me in these lines ;

Then with his sable brow he gave the nod,
That seals his word, the sanction of a God[†].

Why should not I more than once quote *HOMER*'s verses to you, since you will not let me quote any of your own, which I am so ardently desirous to see, that I think verily they are the only bribe, that could corrupt me to appear against the *Andalusians*. I had almost forgot, what ought least to have been forgotten, my thanks for those admirable dates you sent me : they are so good, that I know not whether to give the preference to them, or to the figs and mushroom-rooms. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

There is a certain steadiness of mind in this letter, which can only arise from a sound understanding ; and a certain inclination to oblige, and to give no offence, which can only proceed from a tenderness of heart. This epistle introduces itself with that good humour, which ought always to subsist among friends ; because with men of sense, subjects of the greatest consequence, when treated in an easy and familiar way, lose nothing of their weight and importance, by being devoid of that solemn stiffness, which is so acceptable to the sons of ignorance, and pride.

† *POPE*'s *HOMER*, B. 17. v. 245.

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OCTAVIUS RUFUS was a poet; and PLINY finding it impossible to comply entirely with his friend's request, begins with a quotation out of HOMER, that he might make his denial, though but in part of that request, acceptable at least by the manner of declaring it. VIRGIL, who copied HOMER with a pencil little inferior to his great master's, has translated this quotation thus;

*Audit, et voti Phœbus succedere partem
Mente dedit, partem volucres disperfit in auras* †.

“ APOLLO heard, and part of his request.
“ Confirm'd, in open air dispers'd the rest.”

Good nature is a virtue, that inspires us with the truest notions of tenderness and compassion: but unless it is tempered by cool sense, and deliberate reflexion, it drives us into an extreme of folly and weak compliance, which ends at last in loss of reputation, fortune, and friends. On the other hand, where good nature (as in this letter) is guided by reason, and directed by judgement, it is a godlike attribute, which puts us a degree beyond the common herd of mortals, and makes us worthy the peculiar care and providence of that great source, from whence it springs. To a mind naturally inclined to acts of kindness and humanity, nothing can be more irksome, than to be under a necessity of curbing those generous passions. This is finely illustrated by a passage in VIRGIL, where PALLAS, the son of EVANDER, addressing his supplications to HERCULES, who had formerly been his father's guest and friend, adjures the God by the genial nights, which, in his mortal state, he had once passed under EVANDER's roof, to crown him with victory, and to endow him with the spoils of TURNUS the Rutilian King. Fate rendered the petition vain, and ALCIDES heard with sorrow a prayer, which he could not grant;

*Audit ALCIDES juvenem, magnumque sub imo
Corde premit gemitum, lacrymasque effudit inanes* †.

“ With grief suppress'd, the youth ALCIDES hears,
“ And his full eyes shed unavailing tears.”

‡ Æneid. 11. v. 794.

† Æneid. x. v. 464.

Here VIRGIL, whose benevolence of nature equalled the brightness of his genius, makes even a deity shed tears, when unable to defend and preserve the virtuous son of EVANDER; and the poet, by filling the breast of HERCULES with all the tenderness of affliction, beautifully insinuates, that the greatest courage, and the greatest compassion, generally dwell together in the same soul.

PLINY, who had always been an advocate for the *Bætici*, found himself much embarrassed by a request from GALLUS, who was his particular friend, to be council for him in a cause, which he was carrying on against them. The request was made by OCTAVIUS RUFUS, who insisted, that PLINY should not appear against GALLUS, if he was resolved not to appear for him. The difficulty of sustaining a consistent character gave occasion to this polite letter. *If I could, says our author to RUFUS, excuse myself upon your account to the Bætici, as no doubt I might, for not appearing against a friend, whom I love and honour; yet I should run the hazard of forfeiting that esteem, with which you favour me, by departing from a steady way of acting, that I have hitherto pursued, and which has always met with your approbation. I am to consider your opinion of me in general; and therefore will not, by endeavouring to please you in one particular instance, incur the misfortune of displeasing you ever after. The Bætici are a people whom I have constantly served with the utmost fidelity, and have neither spared pains, nor feared dangers, when I thought I could obtain justice for the province, or do it essential service. I cannot therefore waver now, and plead against those people. But if I cannot plead against the Bætici, much less can I plead against GALLUS. The medium I intend to follow, agreeable to your request, is to withdraw, and to be absent upon the occasion.*

Bætica is a part of Spain now called *Andalusia*. It derived the name of *Bætica* from the river *Bætis*, (at this day the *Guadalquivir*) which runs through the middle of the country. The elder PLINY describes it as a very fruitful spot: *Cunctas provinciarum diviti cultu, et quodam fertili ac peculiari nitore præcedit*: “It has the pre-eminence over the rest of the provinces by the richness of its culture, and its fertile and peculiarly beautiful appearance.” In the time of our author it was a Roman province; and the dangers he hints at, arose from the opposition he constantly

² Plin. Hist. Lib. 3. cap. 1.

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executed, and the accusations he was frequently engaged in against the rapacious governors, who were instituted by DOMITIAN, to pillage, and feast upon this country. Under wicked emperors, provinces must expect wicked governors; and this particular territory was too fine a morsel, not to have some favourite vulture fix his claws upon it: but PLINY, ever zealous in the cause of justice, knew no fear, felt no fatigue, stoop at no danger, when oppressed right, or deserted virtue called him to the bar.

EPISTLE VIII.

PLINY to POMPEIUS SATURNINUS.

YOUR letters, in which you importuned me to send some of my writings to you, came very seasonably. For, I was just then fully determined in that point: you have therefore given the spur to a very willing racer, and have at once saved yourself the excuse of refusing such a trouble, and me the awkward bashfulness of asking it. I think, I may now confidently use the offer, that is made me; neither can you for shame shrink back from your own proposal: however expect not any thing new from a man so indolent as I am. What I am going to ask you, is to pass your judgement once more upon that speech, which I made to my fellow-citizens, when I dedicated a public library to their use. I remember, you then gave me some criticisms upon it in general; but my present request is, that you would not only give a strict attention to the whole, but that you will not let a single syllable escape your most minute correction; for even after your emendations, I shall still be at liberty, either to publish, or suppress. However, your corrections may possibly determine me; and your pen, by frequently going over the work, may either find it unworthy and unfit for the public, or, by the same means, give it another turn, and make it fit to appear. But I must own, that the motives

motives of my delays and apprehensions arise not so much from the speech itself, as from the subject of it; for certainly it is too full of vanity; because I must inevitably wound my modesty (be my expressions never so condescending and humble) when I am obliged to set forth, not only the munificence of my ancestors, but my own generosity also. The path is dangerous and slippery, even although a man were seduced into it by the most urging necessity. For, if an unwilling ear is lent to the praises we bestow upon others, how much more difficult will it be to obtain a patient hearing, when our whole discourse is about ourselves and our relations? If virtue, when naked, is envied, it will be more so, when set off in any ostentatious manner. In short, good deeds can only escape censure, by being buried in obscurity and silence. For which reason, I have often asked my own conscience, Is this composition of mine merely for my own vanity; or is it not as much for the use of the public in general, as for myself?

Another reflexion, that occurs to me, is, that many things, which are necessary whilst we are performing an action, must lose their usefulness and their grace, the moment that action is performed. And not to go farther for examples, what could be more useful than to explain the grounds and motives of my liberality, and even to make it the subject of a discourse? From whence these advantages resulted; first our attention was for some time engaged in a series of virtuous and liberal thoughts; and then again, by dwelling long upon them, we became thoroughly acquainted with their beauties; and lastly, we were secured from the uneasiness of that repentance, which is the certain consequence of a rash and overhasty munificence. Hence too we were in a manner brought to a habit of despising money; for as nature has instilled into all men a desire of keeping

keeping what they have, we, whose love of liberality proceeded from having long and well weighed that virtue in the equal balance of judgement and reflection, released ourselves from those chains, common as they are to the rest of mankind; and our generosity was likely to appear the more to our honour, as it was the effect of reason, and not the fallies of whim and passion. To these arguments may be farther added, that I did not exhibit games or gladiators; but, in their stead, established an annual income for the maintenance of young persons of good families and small fortunes. Pleasures, that are merely for the entertainment of the eyes and ears, are so far from wanting commendation, that they ought rather to be restrained than to be encouraged by public speeches. To induce a man to undergo the irksomeness and fatigue of education; not only gifts, but the most enticing eloquence is necessary: for if physicians, by kind and gentle language, persuade their patients to swallow down their nauseous, yet wholesome medicines; how much more ought a true lover of the public, to use all the soft bewitching arts of oratory, when he exhibits an entertainment not so acceptable as useful to the people? especially, when it was my business to endeavour, that what was given to those, who had children, should be approved of by those, who had none; and that the many others, who must be excluded from an honour, which could be enjoyed only by few, should patiently wait in expectation of that honour, and try to deserve it.

But, as at the time I spoke this speech, I studied more the public advantage, than my own private reputation, in shewing how desirous I was, that the full intention and design of my benefaction should be thoroughly understood and take effect accordingly; so now I am afraid, by sending it into the world, I shall appear to have my own glory more in view, than any advantage that can accrue to other people.

Besides

Besides all this, I cannot forget, that the consciousness of virtue gives more real pleasure, than the fame of it.

Glory should follow, not be pursued: and though merit may not always be crowned with glory, her charms are not the less from that misfortune. But the persons, who do public benefits, and afterwards set them off by public speeches, seem to have done them, that they might be spoken of, not to speak of them, because they had been done. By which means a performance, that might appear highly magnificent, when related by another, vanishes to nothing, when set forth by the author himself. For when people cannot destroy the action, they immediately attack the vanity of it: so that if you do a thing, that ought to be concealed, the action is blamed; and if you do a thing, that ought to be praised, you are blamed for not concealing it.

There is yet another very particular reason, which deters me from making this oration public: for I did not speak it to the people, but I spoke it to the De-curions, nor to them openly, and in the sight of the world, but privately in their own court. I fear therefore it will seem inconsistent, that at the time I spoke it I should fly from the applauses and acclamations of the multitude, and should now run after those applauses and acclamations by publishing the work: and that I should then keep out the people, for whom it was designed, even from the walls of the court, merely to avoid the least shew of ambition, and should now, as it were by a voluntary piece of ostentation, try to gain those very people, who can really reap no other benefit from my gift, than what may arise from the example of it.

You are now told the causes of my delay: however, I will follow your advice, be it what it will; and your authority shall be a sufficient reason for my actions. Farewell,

O B S E R.

OBSERVATIONS.

This letter is obscure in the original. It is too certain, that at this distance of time we must be often obliged to take our aim at random, and rather to guess whereabouts our author is, than to be sure of pointing him out exactly. But, if our suppositions carry with them an air of probability, founded upon reason, they may be no less agreeable, than a well-turned story, which is sure to give pleasure, though it is not full of truth in every particular.

The occasion of this epistle is a most exemplary piece of liberality in PLINY, who had given to the people of *Comum*, his native city, (whose inhabitants enjoyed the privilege of *Roman* citizens,) a public library, open and accessible, at all times, and to all degrees of men. This gift was attended by a speech, in which our author set forth the several advantages, he proposed to his fellow-citizens, by the present he then offered them. A present, which was directed entirely to the benefit of others, and not to any fame or interest, that might accrue to himself. On these occasions it was usual to institute games, and exhibit shews, that might at once adorn and perpetuate the solemnity of so public a benefaction: but the money, which, according to former custom, had been consumed upon these pompous extravagancies, was appropriated by PLINY to another use. He allotted it to establish an annuity for the maintenance and encouragement of a certain number of young persons of both sexes (all *Novocomenses*) whose pedigrees were honourable, but whose fortunes were low; young men and women, who laboured under the dignity of birth, and the slavery of want¹.

No virtue is more easily mistaken than true generosity: because profuseness, ostentation, and cunning, often assume the shape of munificence, and pass upon the world with applause and success. A man, who squanders away his money, without any kind of regard, or choice, upon whom his gifts are bestowed, has no more right to the character of generosity, than the miser, who locks up his riches in a chest. Equipages, numberless servants, useless plate, and fine cloaths, are no greater instances of generosity, than

¹ Vide Lib. 7. Ep. 18.

they are of humility : neither can millions laid out to accomplish some fly design, that lurks behind large bags of money, be esteemed the effects of liberality, or be thought to proceed from a generous heart. PLINY, in this epistle, has distinguished extremely well between true and false liberality : his speech turned upon that topic ; and as he could not avoid to mention in it the particular view he had in so exemplary a piece of munificence, he chose to call his bounty, an imitation of the noble examples set before him by his ancestors, rather than to assume the full glory of it to himself. His modesty farther obliged him to speak this oration to as small an audience as possible ; and therefore he pronounced it to the *decurions* privately in their own court, not suffering the doors to be opened to the impatient multitude, who stood waiting without.

Modesty recommends itself, at the same time that it flies commendation ; and, like the magnet, attracts even iron, without being conscious of the power it contains. What Mr. WALLER ^m says of love, may be applied to modest men ; *the victors fly from the vanquished, the conquerors shun the conquered.* Mr. COWLEY seems to have recollected this epistle, where he says, *It is an hard and a nice subject for a man to speak of himself ; it grates his own heart, to say any thing of disparagement, and the reader's ears to hear any thing of praise from him.*

The *decurions*, spoken of here, by PLINY, were the *decuriones municipales* ; a name given to the senators of the Roman colonies. They were called *decuriones*, because their court consisted of ten persons. AUGUSTUS chose this method to give the cities of *Italy*, such as had colonies, a share in the election of Roman magistrates, the *decurions* having suffrages therein. *Comum*, one of the cities in *Gallia Cisalpina*, was a Roman colony : it had been first made so by SCIPIO, and afterwards greatly augmented by POMPEY and CÆSAR. And as PLINY'S bounty was intended for the use and benefit of his fellow-citizens, it was necessary for him to register his act before the *decurions*, who had in a manner the care and government of the whole province committed to their charge : but even then he followed the most secret and least ostentatious method that could be pursued, and pleaded, as it were, before judges at their own chambers.

^m In love the victors from the vanquish'd fly.

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

PLINY in this, as in some preceding letters, seems to have fixed a resolution, that none of his works should appear in public till they had been overlooked by his friends. Few people were present, when he spoke this oration; but the impatience of seeing it was universal: his genius, learning, manners, and benevolent disposition were known and admired, and he was pressed on all sides to indulge the public with his performances in general, but with this work in particular; which he commits therefore to the perusal of POMPEIUS SATURNINUS, on whose judgement he had the utmost reliance. But time has deprived us of every thing relating to the speech, except this letter.

EPISTLE IX.

PLINY to MINUTIUS FUNDANUS.

IT is strange, that the manner of passing our time at Rome, every single day we stay there, either is, or seems to be agreeable to sense and reason; and yet were we to pass it in that manner all the year round, it would seem the contrary. For example, if you ask a man, *What he has been doing to day?* the answer is, *I attended a friend's son at his putting on the toga virilis: I was at the signing a marriage contract: I was at a wedding: I was witness to a will: I was summoned as advocate in a cause: or, a certain neighbour of mine wanted my advice.* The day you do these things, they seem of great consequence; but when you reflect, that every day has been thus employed, they appear of no consequence at all. And of this you are still more convinced, when you are retired at a distance into the country. Then your memory accuses you, and you cry out, *Alas, how many days have I consumed in trifles?* A reflexion, that constantly occurs to me, as soon as I settle myself at *Laurentinum*, either to read, or write, or use such bodily exercises, as may conduce to the support and cheerfulness of my mind. There I hear nothing, that I re-
pent

pent to have listened to: I say nothing, that I repent to have uttered: no person under my roof vents any scandal; nor is any person subject to my reproofs, except myself, who am often discontented at my own writings. No hopes deceive me; no fears molest me; no rumours disturb me: my books and my thoughts are the only companions with whom I converse. Welcome, thou life of integrity and virtue! Welcome, sweet and innocent amusement! Thou that art almost preferable to business and employment of every kind. O sea! O shore! thou genuine retreat of study! how do you assist and enrich our invention! with what thoughts do you inspire us! Arise then, FUNDANUS! snatch the first opportunity; tear yourself from empty noise, useless hurry, and trifling labours; and give yourself up to study, or repose: for, as our friend ATTILIUS has wisely and jocosely said, *It is better to be quite inactive, than active to no purpose.* Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

In this letter PLINY seems to have considered the many inconveniencies of a city life, and the advantages, pleasures, and satisfaction of a life passed in the country, in retirement and ease. He begins by taking notice, that the bustling employments of the town fill up a man's time so successively, that he has not an hour's leisure to recollect of how little consequence, and how unsatisfactory those occupations are. It is a kind of fashion, says he, at *Rome* to be in a perpetual hurry about such trifles, as appear to us, when we reflect upon them afterwards, merely ropes of sand. He then mentions several ways, that contributed to kill time in that city. The instances he makes use of, are indeed things necessary in themselves to be done, such as marriages, contracts, wills, &c. but the witnesses were generally summoned out of compliment, and rather because they happened to be in town, than because their presence was indispensably wanted; so that a man once freed from the town, would be certainly freed from such employments.

HORACE

EPISTLES.

... life, and says,
... MÆCENAS at
... for the dead, and
... an hundred

[The following text is extremely faint and illegible due to poor scan quality. It appears to be a list of names or titles, possibly related to the epistles mentioned in the header.]

B O O K . I .

man oeconomy in the manner described by JUVENAL, *mens sana in corpore sano*: “the body sound and understanding clear.” And at the same time that it helps digestion, it drives away all those noxious vapours so fatal to the *English* nation in particular, and so destructive to judgement and reason in general. It is performed at less expence of spirits than walking or any other exercise; and seems to have been instituted by providence, at once for the pleasure and preservation of mankind.

PLINY proceeds to tell us, that in the country, he is under no sort of restraint, either in what he hears or what he says. An universal freedom reigns there, and all the blessings of social life are enjoyed in their full liberty and perfection.

Nemo apud me quenquam sinistris sermonibus carpit: “At my table, says our author, there are no bitter insults vented against any person whatsoever; the characters of the present and the absent are equally safe there.” This maxim, laid down in opposition to slander and defamatory flurs, shews such a benevolence of nature, and such an uprightnes of heart, that it cannot be sufficiently admired, nor too closely followed. The *sermones sinistri* are those sort of malicious insinuations, which, by expressing little, leave room to imagine a great deal: they are like poisoned foils, with which no body imagines he can be deeply wounded, and yet their touch is infallible destruction. They consist of half-words, hints, doubts, and sneers; but they never could find admittance into PLINY’s doors.

O dulce otium, honestumque, ac pæne omni negotio pulchrius!
We perceive in this sentence the preference, which PLINY gives to the *otium*, or life of indolence, before the *negotium*, or life of business, not upon all, but upon many occasions. His meaning seems to be this: “As much as I prefer, says he, “the serenity of repose, to a more active, and less re-tired scene of life, yet there are some particular kinds of employment, for which I would quit my tranquillity with pleasure; employments, wherein the interest of my friends, my duty to my emperor, or the prosperity of my country, are depending, and concerned.”

O mare! O littus! verum secretumque Musæon! Quam multa invenitis! Quam multa dictatis! “O sea! O shore! sweet retirement, and suitable place for study, how do you help my imagination, what sentiments do you inspire!” A philosopher, who like PLINY extracted know-

° Juvenal Sat. 10. v. 356.

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

ledge, and gathered speculations from every outward object around him, must cry out, *Quam multa invenitis, diētatique!* whenever he viewed the sea, looked down upon the ground, or turned his eyes up to heaven. The exclamations which he makes use of in this sentence, and which seem to rise upon him as he recollects the happy hours he has passed upon the strand, *καρὰ δὴ τὰ πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης*, are extremely beautiful. The silence of the shore, the prospect on every side, and the solitude of the place, were all so many excitements to thought and reflexion. It was here our author chose to retire; it was here he chose to study; it was here he contemplated the wonders of the deep, and the mighty works of the creation: *Jovis omnia plena*. This was as far as the ablest and the wisest man could go, without the light of Christianity: and therefore PLINY'S notions of the deity must arise from the mighty wonders of the universe, *from the heavens above, from the earth beneath, and from the waters under the earth*: each of which declareth the glory of God, each of which sheweth his handy work.

We see in this epistle a calmness and serenity of thought, a love of solitude and retirement, and a preference of the country to the town, which are the constant effects of a mind void of offence, and totally at peace with itself: and the epistle is at the same time a just censure upon that busy, buzzing, vain-glorious animal, an important trifler; who, in the days of PLINY, was constantly to be found in the *Forum at Rome*, and in these days, and in this island, is to be met with in all public places within the bills of mortality.

EPISTLE X.

PLINY to ATRIUS CLEMENS.

IF ever polite learning shone in our city, it is now in meridian glory: numerous and eminent are the examples of it: out of the many I need quote only one, EUPHRATES the philosopher. When I was a young soldier in *Syria*, I had an opportunity, by being frequently at his house, to look into him thoroughly: and I took some pains to be beloved by him: pains I should not say, for he is by nature easy

easy of access, open, and a strong instance of the humanity which he teaches. I wish I had fulfilled the hopes he conceived of me at that time, in the same proportion, that he has added to the virtues he then had: or, perhaps, I admire those virtues more now than I did at that time, because I understand them better; although as yet I have only an imperfect idea of them; for as in pictures, statues, and works of that kind, a man must be an artist to be a judge: so in wisdom, a man must have it in himself to judge of it in others. But if I judge rightly, the virtues of EUPHRATES are so eminent and conspicuous, that they must necessarily affect any man, who has a moderate share of learning. His arguments are carried on with great acuteness, great weight, and great embellishments: and he frequently displays that sublime and diffusive kind of eloquence, which is so remarkable in PLATO. His style is fluent and often varied, and so distinguished by sweetness, that he both leads and drives those, who are most obstinately determined to oppose him. Add to this the tallness of his stature, the gracefulness of his countenance, his fine head of hair, and his bushy and silver beard: which, though they may be looked upon as the gift of chance, and of no intrinsic value, yet greatly increase the veneration paid to him. His dress is perfectly neat and plain: his looks are grave, not forbidding; so that at first sight he will strike you with great awe, but it is an awe void of fear. The politeness of his manners is equal to the innocence of his life. He attacks the vices, and not the persons of men; nor does he so much chastise, as amend them. Your attention must inevitably follow, and hang upon his instructions: and when you are perfectly convinced by his exhortations, you will wish to hear them again.

He has three children, two of which are sons: these he has educated with the utmost care. His father-

ther-in-law, POMPEIUS JULIANUS, is a man of a most exalted character, but particularly in this, that he, who was governor of a province, and had the chief nobility there at his command, chose out EUPHRATES for his son-in-law, not as a person distinguished by his honours, but by his wisdom. Yet, why should I speak any more of a man, who is lost to me? Is it to encrease the anguish, that I suffer in such a loss? tied down as I am to one of the greatest, and consequently one of the most troublesome employments in the empire: an employment, that obliges me to hear causes, to sign petitions, to make up public accounts, and to write innumerable letters, where not one word of polite literature can possibly be introduced. Now and then I take an opportunity (for sometimes I snatch a moment from business) to complain to EUPHRATES of the fatigues of my employment: he comforts me by assurances, that it is one of the most beautiful parts of philosophy to carry on the affairs of the public, to make oneself master of business, to give judgement, to expedite and to execute justice, and thus to put in practice the various lessons we learn from the philosophers themselves. In this instance his persuasive eloquence fails: nor can I be convinced, that it is better to be employed as I am, than to pass my time in attending his lectures, and learning his precepts; for which reason I am more earnest in exhorting you, who have leisure, that the next time you come to *Rome* (and you should come the sooner for such a call) you will suffer yourself to be polished by so masterly a hand. In this you perceive I follow not the example of many others, by envying those benefits, of which I cannot partake: on the contrary, I feel a most sensible pleasure, in seeing my friends enjoy those advantages, which fate denies to me. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

Every man bears two characters ; the one directly the reverse of the other, and perhaps neither exactly true. This arises from the blind partiality of friends, and the boundless inveteracy of enemies : by the first we are painted gods, by the latter devils ; and yet look into us, and we are only an earthly being, situated betwixt the two extremes. EUPHRATES the philosopher, whose picture is here drawn in so sweet an attitude by PLINY, is painted by PHILOSTRATUS, according to the scholiast CATANÆUS, in the most hideous colours imaginable. PLINY describes him of a very rare, and excellent nature. If PHILOSTRATUS is to be credited, he was *Inter sceneratorum mensas caupo questuarius, scenerator, publicanus, nummularius, ad omnia venalia se convertens, foribus potentiorum magis affixus quam janitores.* So base a character ought not to be rendered into English. But to clear up and explain the injured reputation of EUPHRATES, we may rest on the unblemished honour of PLINY, which, like the shield of AJAX, will at once cover himself and his friends.

The friendship between EUPHRATES and our author began, when the latter was extremely young ; when he was learning the art of war in Syria. It may be imagined from thence, that he was designed for the army, rather than the bar ; but such an imagination can only arise from the narrow method of education that prevails in our own times. The Romans proceeded in another manner ; they bred up the young gentlemen, who were intended for the bar, in the science of war, and military affairs, so that after they had filled the offices of prætor, or consul, they might be capable of governing provinces, and acting, if required, with as much knowledge and authority in the camp, as in the forum. Those, who were designed for the army, were previously brought up to understand the civil constitution, and to know the full scope and extent of the Roman laws : by which means most of their generals were orators, and most of their orators were generals. The soldier knew how to administer justice, and the lawyer knew how to exercise and command troops ; nor can a more compleat character be formed, than the soldier and the orator both joined in one man.

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A man, the state's whole thunder born to wield,
And shake at once the senate and the field ♪.

At the time that PLINY wrote this letter to ATRIUS CLEMENS, he bore one of the chief offices of the state: he was *præfectus ærarii*, a commissioner of the treasury. CORNUTUS TERTULLUS was his colleague in that office. PLINY was equal to the trust and dignity of so great an employment.

♪ POPE'S character of JOHN duke of ARGYLE.

EPISTLE XI.

PLINY to FABIVS JUSTVS.

IT is an age since I heard from you. You will say you have nothing to write: write then to tell me so; or let your letter consist only of that old fashioned compliment, *In hopes that you are well, I am so at this present writing.* This, even this, will satisfy me: for what can I desire more? You imagine I jest; upon my word I am serious. Tell me, pray tell me, how you pass your time? I cannot bear your silence without great uneasiness. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

Absence is the touchstone of friendship. A man of an unsteady disposition flights and forgets those when absent, who were his darling favourites when present: but the heart of a firm and faithful friend is not to be altered by time, place, or other separating circumstances. It is from this constancy of soul, that PLINY shews, in the foregoing short epistle, such a fervency of affection, and such an impatient eagerness after the health, and welfare of FABIVS JUSTVS.

In the freedom and frequency of conversation betwixt two persons, whose intimacy leads them to be often together, little jars, and splenetic altercations will now and then arise, which occasion coolness, and heart-burnings, that create a shyness, and stir up an uneasiness on each side; but absence cures,

cures, and obliterates all such differences; and the absent friend appears like a diamond set to view at a distance, which displays amazing brightness, when not too close to the eye; but upon a nearer approach, and a more minute examination, is often discovered to have some small flaws, that take away from the lustre, and depreciate the value. Death, which is only a longer absence, has the same effect, but in a much stronger degree; so that we frequently see the ill-natured husband weeping with great sincerity over his wife's monument, and the morose father breaking his heart for an undutiful son. There is a strange perverseness in human nature; we love and hate at wrong seasons; past and future pleasures we view through magnifying glasses; the present we never enjoy: but like children cry for those playthings, which, when we have in our hands, we tear to pieces.

To justify these general observations, may we not suppose, that when *PLINY* says to *FABIUS*, *Ludens me putas*, he is conscious of some little bickerings, that had passed between them? the remembrance of which might make *FABIUS* wonder at such warm expressions of love and friendship, and such a zealous and kind reproach, for not being so constant in his epistolary correspondence, as he had been in his personal visits.

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E P I S T L E XII.

PLINY to CALESTRIUS TYRO.

I Have suffered the heaviest loss, if the deprivation of so great a man is to be expressed by that name. *CORELLIUS RUFUS* is gone! fallen too by his own choice! a gauling aggravation of my sorrow; for to me, that kind of death, which proceeds neither from nature nor from fate, seems of all others the most to be lamented. Where sickness puts an end to life, we submit to the inevitable necessity, and are comforted; but where death is voluntarily called in, our grief feels no allay, because we must believe our friends might have lived much longer. *CORELLIUS* was induced

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induced to this action by the strength of reason, (which to wise men stands in the place of fate) notwithstanding the many inducements he had to live; a clear conscience, an excellent character, great influence and interest. Add to these, his daughter, his wife, his grandson, his sisters, and, amidst so many tender pledges, his true and faithful friends: but he laboured under so long, and so grievous an illness, that with all these valuable considerations of life, the motives of death were still stronger. At three and thirty years of age (as I heard him declare) he was first seized with the gout. It was hereditary to him: for our distempers, like other things, are often delivered down to our posterity. Whilst he was young, he conquered and kept it under by abstinence and temperance; and upon the first attack, after he grew into years, he sustained it by the greatness of his mind. I came to him in the reign of DOMITIAN, when he had a house not far from Rome, and found him suffering under the most inexpressible anguish, and the most wretched torments that can be imagined: for at that time the distemper had not confined itself to his feet only, but had wandered through every part of his body. The attendants in his bed-chamber immediately went out: This was his custom whenever any of his most familiar friends came to him: Nay, his wife, a woman capable of being entrusted with the highest secrets, left the room. He rolled his eyes, and said to me: *Wherefore, O! wherefore do you think I bear my cruel pains so long? It is that I may, if possible, outlive this monstrous tyrant⁹, though it were but one single day. Great JUPITER! hadst thou bestowed upon me a body equal to my mind, my wishes should have been accomplished. Heaven granted his desire, with which he was so fully contented, that knowing he should now die a free*

⁹ DOMITIAN,

unenflaved

unenslaved Roman, he broke through all the lesser ties, numerous as they were, that chained him down to life. His distemper had for some time encreased; although he had tried to assuage it by temperance: at length the continuance of it overcame his constancy; and he had already abstained, during four days, from all kind of nourishment, when his wife HISPULLA sent our common friend, CAIUS GEMINIUS, to me, with the dismal news, that CORELLIUS was determined to die; that neither the entreaties of herself, nor her daughter, made the least impression upon him; and that I was the only person left, who could reconcile him to life. I ran immediately, and was already just at his door, when again HISPULLA sent JULIUS ATTICUS to let me know, that now even my intercessions would not avail, so obstinately was he hardened in his resolution. He had said to his physician, who was pressing him to take some food, *I am determined*: A sentence, that filled my soul at once with astonishment and grief. I now reflect what a friend; what a man I am deprived of! He was sixty seven years old when he died; a length of age sufficient for men of the most robust constitutions: I know it. He is released from perpetual torture? I know it. He left his relations, nay he left the commonwealth, dearer to him than all his relations, flourishing and happy. This I know also. And yet I mourn his death, as if he had fallen in the flower of his youth, and the full strength of his constitution: but to own to you my weakness; my sorrow is in a great measure occasioned upon my own account: I have lost, oh I have lost the witness, the guide, the master of my conduct. In short to tell you what, in the first transports of my grief, I said to our neighbour CALVISIUS; I fear I shall grow less circumspect than I have been. Administer therefore some comfort to me: tell me not, that he was old, that he was infirm, (they are circumstances I have

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have long known) but let it be some new, some uncommon consolation ; something I have never heard, nor read. All that I have already heard, or read, occurs to my memory ; but that is not sufficient to overcome my sorrow. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

Among the many misfortunes, to which human kind are liable, the death of friends is least supportable. If the doctrines and consolation of Christianity are often not sufficient to alleviate the weight, how much more heavy must it be to heathens, labouring under the darkness and uncertainty of a future state ? They had indeed a mythology, in which were set before them a heaven and a hell, rewards and punishments, happiness and misery : but the system was mixed with such an infinite number of strange fables, stuffed with so many shocking absurdities, and built on such notorious improbabilities, that it was impossible to be believed by men of learning and philosophy. From the light of nature therefore our author seems to have drawn the following sentiment.

Est enim luxuriosissimum genus mortis, quæ non ex naturâ, nec fatalis videtur. Nam utcumque in illis, qui morbo finiuntur, magnum ex ipsâ necessitate solatium est ; in iis vero, quos accessita mors aufert, hic insanabilis dolor est, quod creduntur potuisse diu vivere.

“ My friend, says PLINY, has fallen by his own hands :
 “ a most melancholy circumstance in the loss of him ; for
 “ surely that sort of death, which is the effect of choice,
 “ and not of fate, is, of all others, the most to be regretted,
 “ especially when I consider that he might have lived much
 “ longer : so that I am deprived of that comfort, which
 “ arises from a total submission to the decrees of heaven.”

Reason, even unassisted, might teach us, that the Being, who gave us life, has a right to dispose of it, when and how he thinks fit : and so sensible were the antients of this doctrine, and of the horrid impiety of self-murder, that VIRGIL has placed the *Suicides* in a state of punishment, arising entirely from their own reflexions on what they had done.

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*Proxima delude tenent mœsti loca, qui sibi lethum
 Infantes peperere matris, lucemque perosi
 Projecerunt animas. Quam vellent æthere in alto
 Nunc et pauperum et duros perferre labores!
 Fas obstat, iræque palus inamabilis undâ
 Alligat, et novius Styx interfusa coerces.*

“ The next in place, and punishment, are they,
 “ Who prodigally throw their souls away.
 “ Fools, who repining at their wretched state,
 “ And loathing anxious life, suborn’d their fate:
 “ With late repentance, now they would retrieve
 “ The bodies they forsook, and wish to live.
 “ Their pains and poverty desire to bear,
 “ To view the light of heav’n, and breathe the vital air.
 “ But fate forbids; the *Stygian* floods oppose;
 “ And, with nine circling streams, the captive souls
 “ inclose †.

It is impossible to read the authors of antiquity; whose writings are so justly esteemed models of every moral virtue; without being convinced, that they imagined themselves to be accountable after death for the actions of their life: and although self-murder became a fashion among some of the Romans, who thought it more honourable to die, than to be enslaved; yet where suicide was committed merely to avoid pain, and to find relief from agony, it was rather deemed an act of impatience than of bravery: and *PLINY* takes notice in this letter, that, notwithstanding the long struggles of *CORELLIUS*, against the torments of his distemper, his constancy at length forsook him, and he died obstinately refusing all nourishment, and declaring with his last breath, that he was tired of life, weary of his sufferings, and positively determined to expire.

The description, which *PLINY* gives of his friend in pain, and the speech, which *CORELLIUS* makes from the couch of sickness, are so concise in the original, that they seem to demand some kind of explanation.

“ In the reign of *DOMITIAN*, *CORELLIUS RUFUS* had
 “ a most sharp and dangerous fit of the gout. I happened

† DRYDEN.

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“ to visit him at that time: he was in a lodging he had taken near the town for the benefit of air: as soon as I entered his chamber, his servants that were about him withdrew, for he would not suffer his domestics, though ever so useful or necessary in his illness, to be present, when any of his friends were in the room: no, nor even his wife, though she was a woman of prudence and secrecy beyond the generality of her sex.

“ When we were alone together, he cried out, rolling his eyes with pain and indignation: Oh! SECUNDUS! SECUNDUS! Are you not amazed I suffer these torments! To what end do you imagine I live? Is life worth purchasing at so dear a rate? Yes, yes, on one account it is: let me outlive DOMITIAN but one single day, and I am satisfied: let me see that tyrant fall before me, and I die with pleasure. Gods! had the strength of my body been equal to that of my mind, at this moment my hand should fulfil the wishes of my heart.”

The next sentence, *affuit tamen Deus voto*, stands in great need of a comment. We might infer from the words, *Heaven granted his request*, that CORELLIUS RUFUS had gathered strength sufficient to kill DOMITIAN, but the context is this.

“ Though the Gods did not endue him with strength sufficient to perform the mighty deed, which his thoughts had entertained, yet they granted his request of outliving DOMITIAN. Heaven permitted him to see the tyrant fall: DOMITIAN perished, and RUFUS survived.”

The latter part of this letter is entirely dedicated to grief: it shews PLINY in a different, and perhaps more amiable light than any of the preceding epistles: he is lost in sorrow, and concludes almost in the words of SHAKESPEARE;

My particular grief

Is of so floodgate and o'er-bearing nature,
That it ingluts and swallows other sorrows,
And yet is still itself.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE XIII.

PLINY to SOSSIUS SENECIO.

THIS year has produced a most plentiful harvest of poets. Scarce a day in the month of *April* has passed without a poem : when learning flourishes, I am always pleased. I wish men of genius to come forward and shew themselves ; although, in general, rehearsals are not well attended : and, as an example of it, you will see great numbers sitting idly in the lobbies, listning to every story-teller that comes in their way, sending in to know whether the orator is yet in his rostrum, whether he has gone through the preface of his speech, whether the greatest part of his performance be over ; and so at length they vouchsafe to come, but how ? slowly and with reluctance. Nor can they then be prevailed upon to stay, but retreat before the end of it, with this difference, that some steal away silyly and unobserved, others go off boldly and unconcerned. Heavens, how unlike is this to the behaviour of **CLAUDIUS CÆSAR** ; who (no longer ago than within the memory of our fathers,) is said to have heard a loud noise, as he was walking in his palace, and to have asked what was the cause of it ! They told him **NONIANUS** was rehearsing in public : upon which the Emperor voluntarily quitted his company, and immediately became one of the audience. But now early solicitations joined to frequent advertisements cannot prevail upon the idlest idler to be present : or, if he comes, it is with a complaint that he has lost the whole day, because it is the only day that he really has not lost. But from hence the more praise and applause must certainly accrue to those, whom neither the laziness nor the pride of such an audience can deter from writing, and speaking in public. For my own part, I have scarce ever ab-

sented

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sent myself from these exercises; which, it is true indeed, were performed by my friends; for there are few, who love literature in general, who have not a particular affection for me. These have been the reasons, that I have wasted more time in town than I designed. I may now fly back to my retirement, and set about some work, which I shall certainly not rehearse in public; lest it should seem, that I attended these rehearsals, not so much to hear, as to put in a claim of being heard in my turn; for it is in this, as in all other matters of favour, if retaliation is expected, the grace of having been one of the audience is entirely lost. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

Throughout this epistle, PLINY discovers his love of letters, and his assiduity and unwearied attendance on the public rehearsals: Exercises, which were generally performed by young orators, who were determined to shine in the forum, and at the bar. To these different ends they rehearsed verses, or made speeches, before as large an audience, as by interest, entreaties, or advertisements, they could draw together. These poetical rehearsals lasted, as we learn from MARTIAL, during the whole day.

Auditur totâ sæpe poeta die †.

PLINY, from poets, turns his observations upon orators, and laments the little attendance that is paid to their recitals, even less than in the days of CLAUDIUS CÆSAR, who did great honour to NONIANUS, by appearing, unasked, at one of his rehearsals. NONIANUS is mentioned by QUINTILIAN as an historian*: SERVILIUS NONIANUS *ipse a nobis auditus est, clari vir ingenii, et sententiis creber, sed minus pressus quam historiæ auctoritas postulat*: “I have been present at the rehearsals of SERVILIUS NONIANUS, † a man of bright talents, and very sententious, but less

* Martial. Lib. x. Ep. lxx.

† Quintilian. Lib. x. csp. 1.

“ close,

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“close, than the dignity of history seems to require.” His works are entirely lost.

In the reign of AUGUSTUS, arts and sciences were cultivated with great success : they rose to their highest pitch of glory, and they made *Rome* the envy and example of the whole world : even *Athens* yielded to her the laurel of fame. In the reigns of TIBERIUS and CALIGULA learning grew languid, and held down her head. TIBERIUS was too wicked to be learned, and CALIGULA knew no more of letters than his consul the horse. However, under CLAUDIUS CÆSAR some degree of literature revived : that dull emperor had in his younger days passed away much time at study ; nay, he was an author, and had a kind of affection for men of genius and erudition ; of which, to say truth, the instance quoted in this epistle is perhaps the strongest, that can be found in history.

These public orations are contrary to our method of introduction to the bar ; and no more time need be taken up in an explanation of them. There is indeed a shadow of that discipline still subsisting in our universities : and certainly speeches delivered from the *rostrum* help to overcome an unhappy bashfulness, which too often eclipses men of the greatest merit, and of the brightest talents : A bashfulness, which the Greeks called *δυσωρία*, and the French *la mauvaishonte*.

E P I S T L E XIV.

PLINY to JUNIUS MAURICUS.

YOU ask me to look out for a husband, to whom you may give your niece : a task, in which you very rightly prefer me before all others. For you well know, how I loved and honoured that excellent man her father. You well know by what encouragements he cherished my youth, and what praises he bestowed upon me at that time, to make me afterwards capable of deserving them. No command of yours to me could carry greater weight and pleasure with it : nor can I be engaged in a more honourable undertaking, than in chusing out some young man, from

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from whom may descend grandsons and successors to ARULENUS RUSTICUS. Such a man might be long sought after, if MUNITIUS ACILIANUS did not present himself to my mind, born as it were for that purpose: he is some few years younger than I am, so that we live with the easy familiarity and affection of young people, and yet he reveres me as an experienced old man. He submits to be modelled and instructed by me, in the same manner as I have been by you, and your brother: his country is *Brixia*, in our part of *Italy*, which still retains and keeps up the modest, frugal, and plain manners of the antients. His father is MINICIUS MACRINUS, the head of the equestrian order, having always declined a higher station: for VESPASIAN offered to choose him one of the prætors; but he was constant and firm in preferring virtuous retirement to such pursuits as ours, which I am in doubt whether to call ambition or dignity. His grandmother, on his mother's side, is SERRANA PROCULA, a native of *Padua*. You know the manners of the place, but SERRANA is an example of the strictest virtue even to the *Paduans*. His uncle is P. ACILIUS, a man of singular authority, prudence, and integrity. In short, throughout the whole family you will find nothing but what will please you, as much as in your own. As for ACILIANUS himself, he is a man of a strong constitution, indefatigable at business, and yet of an invincible modesty. He has passed through the several offices of quæstor, tribune, and prætor, with great honour, and so has saved you the trouble of soliciting those employments for him. His countenance is free and open, his complexion ruddy and healthful, his whole person beautiful and genteel, and his carriage graceful and senatorian. These are accomplishments by no means (according to my way of thinking) to be overlooked; but they are such as ought to be mentioned, as a reward due to a young lady's unblemished

blimished chastity. I do not know whether I should add, that his father is very rich. When I consider to whom I am pointing him out as a son-in-law, I think riches ought not to be mentioned; but when I reflect upon the prevailing customs of the times, and particularly upon the laws of our city, by which men are valued according to the value of their estates, certainly, in that view, riches are not to be omitted. Besides, when we look forward to a numerous posterity, and the many consequences of marriage, a good fortune is a very necessary ingredient. Perhaps you will imagine I have been indulging my partial fondness for ACILIANUS, and have strained the character beyond the truth: but, I give you my word, you will find hereafter, that every thing I have said, will admit of greater latitude, than I have taken. I love the young man entirely, and he deserves my affection. But still, a religious part of that love is not to overload my friends with praises. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

There could not be a stronger mark of confidence shewn by one man to another, than by MAURICUS to PLINY, in an epistle, to which this appears to be the answer. ARULNUS RUSTICUS, who, as we learn by the fifth epistle of this book, fell a sacrifice to REGULUS, left behind him, recommended to the care and guardianship of his brother, JUNIUS MAURICUS, an only daughter, for whom her uncle, *vir gravis, prudens, multis experimentis eruditus*: "A man of great weight, and prudence, and of much experience," desires PLINY to chuse a husband.

Match-makers are at this day looked upon as the pest of mankind; but their disreputation must have been occasioned by the wickedness of mercenary wretches, who try to chain two people together, without any other consideration, than the private advantages, that may accrue to themselves. Such match-makers may be compared to certain jockeys, who, when they bring forth an horse to sale, have an art of mak-

Vide lib. 1. Epist. 5.

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ing him appear healthy, docile, and worth purchasing; but the buyer frequently finds him the next day vicious, headstrong, or perhaps half eaten up with the farcy. Yet what can be in itself a greater instance of friendship, or a more virtuous intention, than to endeavour to make a man and a woman of merit, happy in each other during their lives? PLINY embraces the employment with great alacrity and zeal; and his pleasure is increased by the qualifications, and admired accomplishments of ACILIANUS, whose fortune, person, and character, seem suited to the education and virtue of ARULENA.

When a marriage is completed, that takes rise from good sense, inclination, and equality of age, dignity, and fortune, (such a match as PLINY proposes in this epistle,) the joy is diffused through every branch of the family: the parents, the relations, the friends, taste the sweet effects of the happy union; and the whole scene is a representation of heaven, as near as the state of mortality can come up to it. But, when we turn our eyes towards the other side of matrimony, towards the black, the melancholy, and the tempestuous part of it, the objects are too hideous to be looked at; and the subject too dismal to be delineated.

EPISTLE XV.

PLINY to SEPTITIUS CLARUS.

YOU are a fine gentleman. You promise to come to supper, and never come; it is but justice, that you should pay every farthing the supper cost. An expence, that you will smart for. Let me see then;

There were served up to each guest a single lettuce, three snails, two eggs, a cake, the composition of which was honey, wine, and snow, (I mention snow as a most essential part of the expence, because it perishes in the dish, and cannot appear again) *Andalusian* olives, gourds, garlic, and a thousand other things, equally delicate. Then you might have heard the players; you might have attended to a lecture; or you might have listened to a harp; or indeed, such

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is my generosity, you might have had all these entertainments together. But you (I forget at whose house) regaled yourself with oysters, ragouts of pork, and lobsters, and saw the dancers from *Cadix*, in preference to what I could offer you.

You must suffer for this; I cannot yet determine in what manner: but you have acted cruelly: you have punished me; perhaps I should say too much; if I added, you punished yourself also; and yet I think I may affirm it. How agreeably had we passed our time, sometimes in diversion, sometimes in laughter, and sometimes in study! You may sup more splendidly at many places, but no where with more innocent mirth, or more unguarded freedom. Upon the whole, make the experiment; and if hereafter you do not chuse to sup with me, rather than with any other person, I will excuse you for ever. Adieu.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

The Romans had three meals in the day. The first was the *jentaculum*, or breakfast, which was only a piece of bread dipped in pure wine: the second was the *prandium*, or dinner, which was always very plain and moderate: and the third was the *cæna*, or supper: this was the chief, and generally the last meal, and was never begun till the business and fatigue of the day were over. There were indeed sometimes two other meals; the *merenda*, or afternoon's beaver, and the *comessatio*, or collation after supper: the first of which was rather to satisfy hunger, than to indulge luxury; and the latter was merely to promote riot, drunkenness, and noise. SURTONIUS, in his life of VITELLIUS, has this expression: *Epulas trifariam semper, interdum quadrifariam dispertiebat; in jentacula, et prandia, et cænas, commessationesque*: "VITELLIUS never failed to make three, and sometimes four meals a day: a breakfast, a dinner, a supper, and after that a revelling banquet."

The Romans generally supped about three o'clock during the spring and autumn seasons, in winter about two, and in

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the heat of summer never sooner than four. The supper consisted of three courses: the first was called the *antecœna* or *gustatio*; in which were served up eggs, cockles, and different kinds of shell-fish. The second course was called *cœna*, and consisted of the choicest dainties, amongst which there was always one dish superlatively good, distinguished by the name of the *caput cœnæ*, and never suffered to go away untasted. The third course was the desert, or the *mensa pomorum*, a service of apples, and various sorts of fruits.

As apples were brought up in the last course, so were eggs in the first; from whence the proverb, *ab ovo usque ad mala*: "From the egg to the apple." And during the time of supper the guests were entertained with several diversions, pantomimes, players, musicians, and sometimes gladiators: those, who were more studiously inclined, had certain select pieces read to them out of the best authors; as appears by the account which PLINY gives to SEPTITIUS CLARUS: *Audisses comœdos, vel lectorem, vel lyricum, vel omnes*: "You might have listened to the comedians, or have heard a good reader, or an harper, or might have had all these elegancies united:" and afterwards, *quantum nos lussissemus, risissemus, et studissemus*: "What pastime, what laughter, or what study might we not have enjoyed!"

The feast of TRIMALCHIO by PETRONIUS, and a dialogue in Lucian called *Symposium*, or the *Lapithæ*, explain the Roman suppers, when carried beyond the rules of sobriety, with infinite wit and humour. The feast of NASIDIENUS, in the eighth satire of the second book of HORACE, mentions the manner of wiping down the table:

*Puer altè cinctus acernam
Gausape purpureo mensam perterfit; et alter
Sublegit quodcumque jaceret inutile, quodque
Posset cœnantes offendere.*

- " The ready boy (attendant at our feast
- " With purple napkin) clean, and tightly drest,
- " Wipes down the table, and another there
- " Officious comes, each usefess thing to clear;
- " Careful, that nought behind should ever stay,
- " Which any of the guests might wish away.

" And

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And though tablecloths were not in fashion, yet, as appears by the same satire, every man had his napkin :

VARIUS *mappâ compescere risum*

Vix poterat :

“ VARIUS from laughing scarcely could refrain,
“ But put the napkin to his mouth in vain.”

As a farther instance of cleanliness, a *vestis scenatoria*, or supper garment, was put on whenever the Romans lay down to table; and according to SILIUS ITALICUS, the Gods were constantly addressed in prayer;

*Nec prius aut epulas, aut munera grata Lyæi,
Fas cuiquam tetigisse fuit, quam multa precatus
In mensam :*

“ Nor touch'd the meat, nor tasted was the wine,
“ Till ev'ry guest implor'd the pow'rs divine.”

This was the conduct of a Roman entertainment, when managed with decency, elegance, and order; and for any other, it is not to be found in PLINY, whose manners and morals were too delicate to admit of riot and intemperance.

EPISTLE XVI.

PLINY to SEXTUS ERUCIUS CLARUS.

I Have long been an admirer of POMPEIUS SATURNINUS, whom I may distinguish by the title of our particular friend. I extolled his genius, even before I knew how luxuriant, how manageable, and how extensive that genius was: but now I am wholly captivated by him, and he has full possession of me.

I have often heard him plead with great earnestness, and energy, and at the same time with great politeness, and elegance; and whether his speeches were premeditated or not, they were equally excellent.

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His reflexions were always rightly adapted and numerous; his style was weighty and graceful, and his words were sonorous and sterling.

All these things please extremely, when you hear them delivered with a remarkable vehemence and fire; they please too even without those advantages. You will perceive this as well as I, when you take up any of his speeches to read; and you will allow him comparable to some of the antients, whom he emulates. Look upon him in another light, as a historian, and he will answer your expectations still more. His narrations are concise, perspicuous, delightful, bright, and even sublime. His historical speeches have the same spirit with his orations; only they are more nervous, more close, and more contracted.

Add to this, that his verses are equal to the poetry of CATULLUS or CALVUS. Wit, sweetness, satire, love, are mingled in every line; his verses are generally light and easy, but sometimes harsh and unpolished, and this too in imitation of CATULLUS and CALVUS.

He lately read to me some letters, which he said were written by his wife. I protest, I thought he had been reading PLAUTUS or TERENCE in prose: and whether the letters were his wife's, which he affirms, or whether they were his own, which he denies, certainly he deserves an equal share of glory, either in having composed them himself, or in making a lady, young and unexperienced when he married her, so learned and polite.

I have him before me all the day; I peruse him before I write; I peruse him after I have written; I peruse him when I would unbend my mind; and he is still the same, and still new. I entreat and advise you to follow my example; and let it not be an objection to his works, that the author himself is alive. If he had flourished amongst those authors, whom we have

B O O K I.

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have never seen; we should not only enquire after his books, but we should search out for statues and pictures of him. And shall the honour and happiness we enjoy by having him amongst us, grow languid for that very reason? Surely it is an erroneous and an ill-natured way of thinking; not to admire a man, who is worthy of admiration, because we can see him, speak to him, hear him and embrace him; and because we have not only an opportunity of praising his works, but loving his person. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

Although **PLINY** throughout all his epistles displays an elegance, that charms and improves us at the same time; yet the characters drawn by him of his friends are generally his most accomplished pieces. **POMPEIUS SATURNINUS** was the person, to whom he addresses his eighth epistle of this book. By the purport of that letter, he shews the confidence, which he reposed in the judgement, and integrity of **SATURNINUS**: And, by the character of the same person in this letter, he tacitly gives the reasons of that confidence. He tells us, that **SATURNINUS** was eminent as a lawyer, an historian, and a poet: in pleading causes he was at once earnest in the defence of his clients, and polite in the treatment of his adversaries; a generous enemy, and a determined friend. As an historian, he was particularly nervous in his style, and perspicuous in his narrations: in his poetry, like **CALVUS** and **CATULLUS**, he dealt equally in satire and in love. The poems of **C. LICINIUS CALVUS** are irrecoverably lost: he was the intimate friend of **CATULLUS**; he has been mentioned by **PLINY** in the second epistle of this book, as an orator, whom he admired and chose to imitate. In this epistle he is considered as a poet. The name of his mistress is recorded by **PROPERTIUS**, and **CATULLUS**: The following lines point out the affliction of **CALVUS** at her death:

*Si quicquam mutis gratum acceptumve sepulchris
Accidere a nostro, CALVE, dolore potest,
Cum desiderio veteres revocamus amores,
Atque olim amissas stemus amicitias,*

I 4

Cerisi,

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*Certe, non tanto mors immatura dolori est
QUINCTILIÆ, quantum gaudet amore tuo.*

“ If silent sepulchres, my CALVUS, know
“ Our real sorrows, and accept our woe;
“ When with our tears our friendships we pursue,
“ And former loves in spite of death renew;
“ QUINCTILIA pleas'd submits to fate's decree,
“ Nor mourns her early death, when wept by thee.

The satirical vein of CALVUS is said to have been exerted in the cause of liberty against POMPEY and CÆSAR; the latter of whom was satirized with equal severity by CATULLUS. The behaviour of CÆSAR upon that occasion is much to his honour: He silenced the poet by kindness, and drew him to his friendship by humanity. But his behaviour to CALVUS is unknown.

Legit mihi nuper epistolas, quas uxoris esse dicebat: PLAUTUM vel TERENCEM metro solutum legi credidi, &c.
“ when he read to me the other day some letters, written,
“ as he assured me, by his wife, I could not help thinking,
“ from the delicacy of the stile, and the peculiar turn in
“ the phrases, that they had been composed by PLAUTUS or
“ TERENCE: but supposing them written by his wife, as
“ he affirms, and not by himself, as I suspect, yet his merit is so far from being lessened by her accomplishments,
“ that it is rather heightened by the improvements she appears to have received since their marriage: Improvements,
“ that must have been derived from his tuition.” The wife of SATURNINUS was particularly fortunate in such a husband; he was her preceptor, her guide, her lover, and her friend. His precepts were delivered in the fondness of his heart, and his lessons dictated in the warmth and tenderness of affection. He endeavoured to improve her understanding, and to cultivate and bring forward the blooming beauties of her mind. Providence has originally given the same degree of perception to one sex, as to the other: the sun-shine of education must ripen and produce the fruit.

‡ Catul. Carm. xciv.

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EPISTLE XVII.

PLINY to CORNELIUS TITIANUS.

VIRTUE and acts of friendship are not yet extinct among mankind ; there are those, who shew themselves friends even to the dead. TITINIUS CAPITO has obtained the request he made to our emperor, that he might be permitted to place in the *forum* a statue of L. SYLLANUS. It is noble and worthy of the highest applause, to make use of the emperor's friendship to such purposes, and to employ our share of the royal favour in gaining honours for other men. It has been the constant practice of CAPITO to revere the most distinguished and brilliant characters of every age : and you would wonder, to see with what great exactness, and with what religious respect, he has placed in all the convenient parts of his house the statues of the BRUTII, the CASSII, and the CATO's ; each of whom he has celebrated in an excellent poem containing the chief actions of their lives. You may be certain, that he, who loves virtue so much in others, abounds with it himself : and by that immortality, which CAPITO has given to LUCIUS SYLLANUS, he has secured his own : for it is not less honourable to place the statue of another man in the *Roman forum*, than to have our own erected there. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

All honours bestowed upon the dead, and all marks of tenderness shewn to the memory of deceased friends, are strong instances of a most lasting disinterested affection. It is observable from this epistle, that TITINIUS CAPITO did not confine his affections within the narrow limits of his familiar acquaintance, or his immediate relations ; but extended his regards to all those, who had in any age distinguished

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Each tender breast her virtue must revere,
And every wife and sister drop a tear.

And now the emperor having gained a decree from the senate, that an uncle might marry a niece, he publicly solemnized his espousals with the sanguinary and relentless **AGRIPPINA**, daughter of his own brother **GERMANICUS**. Upon the emperor's wedding day **L. SYLLANUS** killed himself. Thus fell the son a sacrifice to the ambitious views of **AGRIPPINA**, as his father **APPIUS** had fallen to the libidinous passions of **MESSALINA**; upon which **TACITUS** makes a remark to this purpose; "The city of *Rome* was now differently enslaved from what it had been. It was heretofore a prey to the wanton debaucheries of **MESSALINA**, but now to the pride and haughtiness of **AGRIPPINA**, who, though a woman, was resolved to govern with all the tyranny of a man."

When we consider this melancholy part of the Roman history, and look back upon all the particulars mentioned in this epistle of **PLINY**, it is difficult to determine, whether it reflects greater honour upon **TRAJAN**, in permitting the statue of **SYLLANUS** to be put up at *Rome*, or upon **TITINIUS CAPITO** in placing it there.

† Tacit. Annal. lib. 12. c. 7:

EPISTLE XVIII.

PLINY to **SUETONIUS TRANQUILLUS**.

YOU send me word you have been frightened by a dream, which gives you great uneasiness, as you think it an ill omen in your law-suit. You desire me to ask favour of the court, that it may be put off, only for some few days: it will certainly be difficult to obtain the latter part of your request; however I will try;

"For dreams descend from Jove".

‡ Pope's Homer, Iliad 1. v. 85.

But

But it is worth while to consider, whether you are not used to dream by contraries. A dream of mine, which, upon this occasion, occurs to my remembrance, might encourage you to expect success, where you most fear a defeat. I was engaged in a cause for JULIUS PASTOR, when I dreamt that my mother-in-law appeared kneeling to me, and entreated me not to plead. I was at that time a very young lawyer, I was to plead in four different courts, and I was engaged not only against the most powerful men in the state, but even against some of the emperor's chief favourites: any one circumstance of which, after such a dismal dream, was enough to startle me from my purpose: but I went on, reasoning in the words of the poet,

“ Without a sign his sword the brave man draws,
“ And asks no omen but his country's cause.”

My country, and, if any motive could be dearer than my country, the trust reposed in me, urged me on. But I succeeded to the full extent of my wishes; and the pleading of that day attracted to me the attention of the people, and opened the gates of fame. You will consider from hence, whether you may not look upon your dream, rather as a good, than an evil omen. But, if you are resolved to proceed according to the old cautious maxim, “ Never to do any thing with a doubting heart,” tell me so, and I will find out some turn or other, that your cause may not be brought on but when you please. For my situation was very different from yours. The court of centumvirs must necessarily sit; but the court, where your cause is to be tried, may be adjourned, though not without difficulty. Farewell.

* POPE'S HOMER, Iliad 12. v. 283.

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OBSERVATIONS.

It is no wonder that a man, who has a law-suit upon his hands, should be molested by evil omens, and haunted by frightful dreams: the uncertainties and fears, which encumber a mind thus situated, must summon up numerous vapours, and various chimeras, that in a more calm and less anxious state, could never arise even in a dream: and when we consider the particular character of SÆTONIUS, to whom this epistle is written, we shall be the less surpris'd to find him alarmed by ghosts, and terrified by goblins. He is an author, who deals much in that kind of superstition, and never suffers one of his twelve emperors to die, without half a dozen prodigies going before him.

PLINY, we find, was not so easily scared by apparitions; he paid little or no respect to his mother-in-law, though she appeared kneeling at his feet: he pursued his first design, and exerted himself in a cause before the *centumviri*, in such a manner, as greatly increased that growing reputation, of which the observance of his dream must have deprived him.

The number of the *centumviri*, although they retained their name, was at this time increased to one hundred and eighty; they were divided by TRAJAN into four different courts or chambers, [*quadruplici judicio*] each consisting of forty five judges. They were magistrates chosen to decide the law-suits, that might arise among the people: their judgements were called *centumviralia judicia*, and they were the last and highest court of justice, to which there was any appeal.

EPISTLE XIX.

PLINY to ROMANUS FIRMUS.

THE same town gave us birth, the same school bred us up, and the same chamber held us in the earliest dawns of our life. Your father had a strict friendship for my mother, for my uncle PLINY, and even for me, as far as the difference of our years would

would permit. These are great and just reasons, why your promotion ought to be next my heart. By your being already *decurion*, it plainly appears, that your present fortune amounts to an hundred thousand sesterces ^b: but we must not let you stop there: we must also enjoy the pleasure of seeing you a Roman knight: and therefore I send you three hundred thousand sesterces ^c, that you may be immediately qualified for that order. The long continuance of our friendship answers and prevents your acknowledgments on this occasion. If I did not know you, I would remind you of what I am sure you will do without any hint. You will be as little elated with the new dignity, which I have procured for you, as possible, and will consider, that a character is to be kept up with the nicest circumspection, when a man is to reflect reputation and honour upon those friends, who promoted him. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

In this letter methinks PLINY seems to have fulfilled that wise and generous precept of SOLOMON to his son, *“thine own friend, and thy father's friend forsake not.* As it is very certain, that the human soul is not capable of any greater perfection, or any nearer approach to the divine attributes, than in acts of friendship; so is it full as certain, that in friendship itself, there can be no stronger instance of sincerity, no plainer proof of affection, than where a man parts voluntarily and unasked, as in this epistle, with a large sum of money to supply the wants, or to raise the fortune of his friend. Riches of the mind are frequently bestowed, with great generosity and profusion, on those companions, whom we hold nearest our heart: our choicest thoughts are brought forth and laid before them, with a liberality, that requires no other kind of restitution, than a small return of

^b *Centum millium censum*: equal to 807 l. 5 s. 10 d.

^c *Trecenta millia nummum*: equal to 2421 l. 17 s. 6 d.

^d *Proverbs xxvii. 10.*

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acquiescence or applause. But the stores of fortune are not so easily parted with; they are not so indiscreetly given away, or, if they are produced, if they are lent, it is not only with caution and consideration, but with an attendance of bonds, judgements, interest, and securities, that discover very different motives from friendship. But we have already seen such a bounteous disposition in our author, and shall, in the course of these epistles, meet with so many instances of generosity, flowing from the inexhaustible springs of his natural benevolence, that, whatever may have been the practice among other men, PLINY can never be suspected of meanness, or avarice.

EPISTLE XX.

PLINY to CORNELIUS TACITUS.

THERE is a friend of mine, a man of knowledge and erudition, with whom I have frequently a dispute, concerning a certain brevity, which he thinks the chief excellence in pleading causes. I confess, this qualification ought to be preserved, where the nature of the cause will permit, and where the merits of it can be brought into little room: But, otherwise it is a downright fraud upon the client, either to omit any necessary matter, or lightly and cursorily to run over those circumstances, which ought to be repeated, inculcated, and imprinted. For in most causes, the larger scope you take, the greater weight and force will attend your pleadings: and as the continuance of the blow contributes equally with its quickness, in making deep wounds on the body, exactly thus is it with impressions made upon the mind.

This opinion my friend attacks with authorities from the ancients. Among the *Grecians* he urges the orations of *LYSIAS*: among our own countrymen, those of the *GRACCHI* and *CATO*; many of which are short and concise.

On

On the other hand, I oppose DEMOSTHENES, ÆSCHINES, HYPERIDES, and many others to LYSIAS. I oppose POLLIO, CÆSAR, and CÆLIUS, to the GRACCHI and CATO: but my chief example is MARCUS CICERO, whose longest oration is allowed to be the best: and believe me, a good book, like other good things, is the better in proportion as it is larger. You perceive, that in statues, sculptures, pictures, and other various representations of men, animals, and trees, if they are valuable, their value encreases with their size: and orations should be measured by the same rule. Besides, bulky volumes make a handsomer appearance, and carry with them a kind of indisputable authority.

My friend, who has a particular art of sliding away insensibly out of reach in a dispute, evades this argument, and every thing else of the kind, by asserting, that those orators I quoted, to support me, did, in truth, make shorter speeches than they have published. I am of another opinion, and can defend it by a greater number of examples. Let me single out TULLY in defence of MURENA and VARENUS; in both which orations, he mentioned several heads of crimes, imputed to his clients, unnoticed in his defence, and to be found only in the titles of those orations. From whence it appears, that he certainly spoke a great deal more than he published. In his defence of CLUENTIUS, he tells us, that, according to the antient constitution, he went through the whole proceedings without a coadjutor; and, in his speech for CORNELIUS, he affirms he was four days in his pleadings. So that we have no room to doubt, that those orations, which cost so much time in the repetition, extended then much farther, than they now reach, crowded as they are into one book; which, although large, could never have contained them, unless he had pruned and lopt off many of the branches.

But extempore pleadings, and studied written orations, are two very different things. Well, I know there are people of this opinion: yet, for my part, I am fully convinced, perhaps erroneously, that there is no other real difference between them than this: A pleading may be very good, when pronounced; which would not appear a good speech, when committed to paper: but it is impossible, that a speech, which stands the test of writing and reading, should not bear the test of speaking and hearing; for the formed speech is indeed the ground-work and model of the pleading, and therefore in our best orations, such I mean as were never spoken, but only published, we find a thousand extempore figures, which could have no place naturally and properly, but in real pleadings. For example, in that oration against *VERRES*; *Did you name a workman complese in every art? Who is he? Thanks to your hint, I now recollect him. POLYCLETUS is the man.* Hence it follows, that every pleading must be more or less perfect, in proportion to the likeness it bears to the formed oration; I mean every pleading, to the delivery of which a sufficient time has been allowed: for certainly, where an orator is confined within too narrow limits, the judges, not the speaker, are to blame. Our very laws and customs favour my opinion, which are so far from insisting upon brevity, that they indulge great copiousness, that is great exactness, in pleadings, which is inconsistent with brevity, unless in the shortest and plainest causes. Let me add what experience, that master of undoubted authority, has taught me. I have gone through the several offices of a pleader, a judge, and a counsellor; and I have observed, that some are actuated by one reason, some by another, and that often the minutest circumstances draw on the most important consequences. The judgements of men are different; their inclinations are various. This renders their opinions so very widely

widely distant upon the same cause ; or, if they agree, even their agreement is founded on opposite motives. Besides, every one favours his own turn of thought, and embraces that as the strongest reason, which, when given by another, tallies with what he had before determined within himself. You must take care therefore to throw among your hearers a variety of arguments, that every man may catch something, which he looks upon and feels as his own.

REGULUS said to me one day, when we were engaged on the same side, *You fancy, that every single circumstance in a cause must be fully discussed and exhausted : my method is to lay my stress upon the principal point, and by fixing at once on my adversary's throat, I strangle him in a moment.* It is very true, REGULUS always presses that point home, upon which he fixes ; but then he is often wrong in his choice. Therefore my answer to him was, *You seize upon the throat, as you imagine ; but perhaps at last it proves only the knee, the leg, or the ankle. Now I, who, to say truth, have not skill enough to come at the throat directly, aim at every place, try every part, and leave no stone unturned. I take the same method in pleading, as in agriculture. I not only cultivate my vines, but I take care of my trees ; and not of them only, but of my fields : And as in those fields I do not confine myself to sow one particular sort of finer wheat or corn, but every kind of pulse and grain whatever ; so in my speeches, I crowd in every argument, and strew them as thick as I can, that I may be sure to gather in some successful crop ; for seasons are not more uncertain and clouded, nor soils more precarious, than the tempers and determinations of our judges.*

I cannot upon this occasion avoid recollecting the encomium upon that finished orator PERICLES, by EUPOLIS the comic poet :

Softest persuasion sat upon his tongue,
 And on his lips engaging sweetness hung ;
 Yet with a strength that fix'd upon the mind,
 That forc'd its way, and left its sting behind.

But this persuasive eloquence, and this engaging sweetness of PERICLES himself, could never have triumphed thus, either by the brevity or velocity of it, (which are two very different things) or by the help of both together, without the greatest abilities ; for it is certain, that, when an audience is to be at once persuaded and delighted, a copiousness of matter, and a proper space of time, are necessary to produce it. For the sting, which ought to remain behind, not only requires a speedy thrust to make it enter, but a continued force, to sink it deep into the minds of the hearers: To this may be added, what another comic poet * says of the same PERICLES,

He lighten'd, thunder'd, and confounded *Greece*.

Here you see his speeches were not lopped short, and maimed, but diffusive, magnificent, and sublime. He rolled his thunder, he darted his lightning : all things were in the utmost perturbation, and confusion.

Is there not however in oratory a medium preferable to all extremes ? Certainly. But this medium is no less transgressed by too much conciseness, than by too much prolixity ; by one, who takes too little compass, than by him, who takes too large a circle. From hence arises a frequent complaint, that one orator is immoderately redundant, another jejune and feeble. One is said to overshoot the point, another to fall short of it. Both equally wrong : One from

* ARISTOPHANES.

too much weakness, the other from too great strength ; which last is an error on the best side, proceeding from a superiority of genius, though too uncorrect and unbridled. But when I say this, do not imagine, that I approve of that ceaseless bawler *THERSITES* in *HOMER*. No, I rather applaud the character of *ULYSSES* in the same poet :

But when he speaks, what elocution flows !
Soft as the fleeces of descending snows ^f.

Not indeed, but there is another character ^e in the same author, that I admire as much as possible :

His words succinct, yet full ^h.

And yet were I to have my choice, I should prefer that oration, which comes on us, like winter's snow, thick, continued, and in large quantities ; in a word, which seems to descend from heaven, and to be poured down from the skies.

But, many people prefer the concise manner of pleading. I allow it ; but who are they ? Only such, whose indolence leads them into that opinion. And would it not be ridiculous to admit their judgements as decisive, whose nicety proceeds from downright laziness ? If their advice must be taken, it is not only better to make short speeches, but to make none at all.

These are my present sentiments, which I shall readily alter, if you disapprove them ; but then give me the reasons of your disapprobation, because at the same time that I owe an implicit obedience to your authority, yet, in an affair of this consequence, I would chuse to be convinced rather by argument,

^f POPE'S *HOMER*, II. 3. *l.* 283.

^e POPE'S *HOMER*, II.

3. *l.* 277. ^h The character of *MENELAUS*.

than authority. If you think me not in an error, let me know it by a letter as short as you please; however, give it under your hand, that I may see my own judgement confirmed by yours. If I am wrong, I insist upon a long letter to convince me of my mistake. Tell me, is it not a kind of bribe, to desire you would give yourself but little trouble, if you agree with me; and a great deal, if you differ from me? Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The epistle now under consideration is the least agreeable of any yet translated. We see an oration before us, instead of a letter; an oration, which is in itself the strongest argument against that prolixity, for which PLINY contends. He might have said, in a much less compass, more than he has said throughout the whole letter: and therefore REGULUS seems to be in the right, who chuses to throttle a man all at once, rather than break his bones, joint by joint.

To make this epistle as profitable, and entertaining, as the subject will admit, let us take notice of some persons and passages, not unworthy of observation.

Hic ille mecum auctoritatibus agit, ac mihi ex Græcis orationes LYSIÆ ostentat: "Among the Grecian authorities, which he produces, LYSIAS is always quoted by him." LYSIAS was the son of CEPHALUS; born at *Syracuse*, but brought early out of *Sicily* by his father, and educated at *Athens*. He was one of the most considerable orators among the Greeks. QUINTILIAN gives him a character to this effect: "The style of LYSIAS is extremely elegant and close: if the perfection of an orator is to instruct, no man exceeds him in that art: he goes directly to the point, and never strays from the purpose; and if we cannot compare him to a great river, at least he may be looked upon as a clear fountain."

We learn from TULLY, who goes beyond QUINTILIAN in his praises of LYSIAS, that he never appeared at the bar. The works he published were numerous, and various. He died old, poor, and under the sentence of banishment; an unfortunate catastrophe for so great a man. His ruin was occasioned by the jealousy of the Athenians, who,

who, impatient of his superior genius, drove him out of a colony established by them at *Tiburium* in *Italy*; a place he was particularly fond of, having been settled there from the age of fifteen years, and having purchased also in that colony an house, and an estate, with an intention to finish his life in the same place, where he had passed so great a part of it.

The examples in history of men, who fall a sacrifice to their own abilities, and are sunk down by their own weight, are as innumerable, as they are melancholy. If a short conjecture is allowable on the seeming inequality of their fate, perhaps these punishments are sent by Heaven merely to crush that vanity, and to scourge that ingratitude towards the Creator, which extraordinary endowments are too apt to inspire. The heathens were of this opinion, as appears by the fables of *ARACHNE*, *NIOBE*, and others: and Christians ought to remember, that *unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required.* But to return to our epistle.

Vides ut statuas, signa, picturas, hominum denique, multorumque animalium formas, arborum etiam, si modo sint decoræ, nihil magis quam amplitudo commendat: idem orationibus evenit:

“It is in orations as in pictures, statues, and other things of that kind: the largeness of the size encreases the value.”

Quin etiam voluminibus ipsis auctoritatem quandam et pulchritudinem adjicit magnitudo:

“A large book looks better than a small one;” or, in other words, “there is a much greater air of authority in a folio, than in a duodecimo.”

These two assertions are very surprizing, in a person of our author's taste, and can be excused by nothing but a partial fondness for his own opinion. In pictures and statues, it is the symmetry, or proportion, that strikes the eye, and pleases the understanding, whether the figures represented be of dwarfs, or giants. And so in books; it is the matter contained within, not the number of leaves, that stamps value, and gives reputation to the volume. *PLINY*'s argument certainly has little weight in it, and deserves no other answer, than what is contained in that old Greek epigram:

Εἰ τὸ τρίφειν πῶσινα δοκεῖ σοφίαν περιποιεῖν,
 Καὶ τράλῃ ἐν πῶσι ἐγύλος ἐστὶ Πλάτων

If length of beard deep knowledge must denote,
 Yield, PLATO, yield, in wisdom, to the goat.

Artificem quemnam? recte admones: POLYCLEETUM esse dicebant. "Questions and answers, says LONGINUS^k, not "only enliven and add great strength to a speech, but "make it more plausible, and give it an air of greater "probability; for the passions never work more strongly "upon the auditors, than when the answers seem not to be "the effect of premeditation, but to rise naturally from the "thing treated of. This appears very much in interroga- "tions, and responses to those interrogations; especially, "where the quickness of the answer demanded, will not "admit of a studied untruth." The sentence quoted out of Tully is an instance of this kind of oratory. The question asked is purposely to raise the expectations of the audience, and to heighten the character of POLYCLEETUS. This POLYCLEETUS was a Grecian statuary, born in Sicyon, a city of Peloponnesus. PLINY the elder mentions many famous statues made by him, and particularly one, in which the proportions of the human body were so exactly adjusted, that it was called *the master-piece*. He flourished in the eighty seventh olympiad, above four hundred years before the Christian æra.

Πᾶσα denique λίθον κινῶ: "I leave not a stone unturned." I am afraid the Greek sentences, which are every now and then interspersed, in imitation of TULLY, throughout these epistles, have occasioned some of those criticisms upon our author, which accuse him of affectation, and want of ease in his familiar letters. It is not to be denied, that this mixture of languages is totally inconsistent with that unstudied simplicity, which ought to distinguish the epistolary style.

The life of PERICLES will be found in PLUTARCH; but, as his character is here quoted in some beautiful lines from EUPOLIS and ARISTOPHANES, let us recollect what HORACE says of those comic poets:

^k Longinus. Sect. 18.

EUPOLIS, atque CRATINUS, ARISTOPHANESQUE poeta,
 Atque alii, quorum comœdia prisca virorum est,
 Si quis erat dignus describi, quod malus, aut fur,
 Quod mæchus foret, aut scarius, aut aliqui
 Famofus, multâ cum libertate notabant.

“ When antient comedy became first known,
 “ The noted bards, who wore the laurel crown,
 “ With manly spirit, and becoming rage
 “ Dragg’d ev’ry villain on the public stage;
 “ There the throng’d audience each vile deed survey’d,
 “ The pimp expos’d his person, and his trade:
 “ Each thief from satire’s lash stole sense of shame;
 “ And each assassin wept his murder’d fame.”

By these lines, and by those which follow in this fourth satire of HORACE’s first book, the poet observes, with great spirit and excellent raillery, how much greater liberties were taken, in the earliest ages, with the conduct and characters of bad men, than were allowed of in his days. As vice encreas’d, an abhorrence to hear truth encreas’d also. The wicked turn aside from reproof, and the vain cannot bear it:

Omnes hi metuunt versus, odere poetas:

“ They dread the satire, and the poets hate.”

A just satirist, as he will always be dreaded by knaves, will be cherished and admired by honest men. Yet, the natural tendency of mankind to malice and detraction is such, that every scribler endeavours to gain this character, by throwing filth and calumny on all around him: but satire, in the hands of a fool, bears no more resemblance to the delicacy of that art, than the lightning of the playhouse bears to the lightning in the skies: we see a faint flash, and we smell a disagreeable stench, and then it vanishes without doing any execution: whereas true satire, like true lightning, wounds every object it aims at, melts the sword, without injuring the scabbard, reaches the soul, but leaves the body untouched. The antient Greek comedies always a-
 bounded

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bounded with this kind of poetry; and QUINTILIAN says, that, after the works of HOMER, which are beyond all degrees of comparison with any other books whatever, the ancient comic poets may be looked upon as the best models, by which an orator can form his style.

EPISTLE XXI.

PLINY to PLINIUS PATERNUS.

I Rely as much upon the delicacy of your eye, as upon your judgement; not because you excel me in skill (do not flatter yourself,) but because you equal me in it; and that, you will allow, is saying a great deal. However, jesting aside, I really think the slaves I bought, by your advice, are well-behaved and comely. All that remains to be tried now, is their fidelity, which in slaves is better discovered by the ears, than the eyes. Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

The slaves, which PLINY bought, were, in all probability, Asiatics; for according to HORACE, *Cappadocia*, although destitute of money, abounded in slaves.

*Mancipiis locuples eget aris Cappadocum rex*¹:

“ The *Cappadocian* king is rich in slaves,
“ But destitute of money.”

And PERSIUS tells us, that those slaves were plump and sleek:

Ne sit præstantior alter

*Cappadocas rigidâ pingues plausisse catasta*²:

“ How large a family of brawny knaves,
“ Well-fed and fat as *Cappadocian* slaves.”

¹ Horat. Lib. 1. Epist. 6. v. 39.

² Persius, Sat. 6. v. 76.

³ DRYDEN'S Persius, Sat. 6. ver. 181.

Mr. DRYDEN, in his note upon these lines, says, that the *Cappadocian* slaves were famous for being lusty, well favoured, and in good liking; their activity and strength was remarkable, and they were looked upon as preferable to any other slaves in the world. The inhabitants of *Cappadocia* were not only born to slavery, but in love with it; and when the Romans offered to make them a free people, they refused the offer, and chose to hug their chains, and live under the yoke of servitude, rather than enjoy the blessings of liberty.

How strange! how incredible! how amazing! must this servility appear, in a country, whose characteristic is liberty!

With native freedom, as with courage blest,
 Chains, and each mark of thralldom we detest.
 'Tis heaven's high gift, 'tis nature's great decree,
 That none be slaves, whom God himself made free.
 Revere we ought those powers, which we entrust,
 But to ourselves be resolutely just;
 Scorn base corruption, nor like slaves disown
 The laws that fix'd our monarch in his throne:
 For well we know by truth's eternal rules,
 Where slaves are subjects, subjects must be fools.
 Exert but reason, liberty will reign,
 And tyranny exalt her impious head in vain.

E P I S T L E XXII.

PLINY to CATILIUS SEVERUS.

I Have been kept a long time here in town, and in a very desponding way, occasioned by the tedious and stubborn illness of TITUS ARISTO, whom I particularly love and admire. His prudence, his virtue, and his learning are not to be exceeded; so that, in my opinion, it is not only one man, who is in danger, but all polite literature, and the whole circle of arts and sciences. As he is equally well versed in all
 acts

acts of the legislature, both public and private ; so is he a perfect master of history, and the great examples of antiquity. There is nothing you can wish to learn, which he is not able to teach. He is the treasure, from whence I always draw my hidden riches. What sincerity and authority attend his words ! How proper and becoming are his delays ! For, although he sees through every thing in a moment, yet he is ever slow and cautious in his determinations, always doubting upon the reasons urged on both sides, which, with a most piercing judgement, he fails not to trace up to their original fountains, and then gives them their due weight in his decisions. Add to this the temperance of his diet, and the decency of his dress. When I look into his chamber, and see the furniture there, I behold a picture of the antient frugality. The greatness of his mind gives an ornament to the whole, as none of his actions proceed from ostentation, but all from purity of conscience. He seeks his reward from the excellence of his conduct, not from the applause, which attends it. In short, few of those men, who in outward appearance seem philosophers, can be compared to him : he does not indeed follow either the schools, or the porticos ° ; neither does he mispend his own time, or the time of other persons, in tedious disputations. His hours are passed in business, or at the bar ; he assists some by his pleadings, and more by his advice. But he is equal to the greatest men whatever, in modesty, religion, and justice, and principally in the fortitude of his mind. It would have surpris'd you, had you been here, to have seen with what resolution he has born this illness, how he has resisted pain, how he has endured

° The Athenians kept their schools in porticos ; so did the Romans : the philosophers disputed there. And it is from these covered galleries, that the Stoics derived their name, *Stoa* signifying in Greek a portico.

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thirst, and with what patience he has lain loaded with clothes, to carry off by perspiration the cruel heat of a burning fever.

The other day he sent for me and some of his select friends, and desired us to enquire of his physicians into the nature of his distemper, that if it was incurable, he might chuse an immediate death; but if only stubborn and tedious, he might stand firm, and struggle with it as he ought: for he thought it not allowable to frustrate the prayers of his wife, the tears of his daughter, and the hopes of his friends, if there were any grounds for those hopes, by putting an end to his own life. A noble determination! but difficult to keep; for you may observe, that most men hurry with eagerness to their relief, which is only to be attained by death: but to weigh each motive with deliberation, and to consider the reasons for and against life, and to live or die according to the strength of those reasons, are all instances of a great mind. The physicians promise us success to our wishes: may God fulfil them, and deliver me from this scene of sorrow. As soon as I am released, I will fly to my *Laurentinum*, to my books, my papers, and my studious retirement. At present, my attendance on my friend affords me no leisure, and my anxiety about him no inclination for study. Thus have I sent you all my fears, all my wishes, and all my intentions. In return, tell me how you have disposed of yourself? what you are now doing? and what you will do? But I hope to hear from you in a more chearful strain than mine. It will be no small relief to my misery, that you live free from all complaint. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The various accomplishments of **TITUS ARISTO**, his great skill in the laws, his extensive knowledge in antient history,

history, the firmness of his mind, the fortitude with which he looked at death, the simplicity of his morals, and the integrity of his heart, are so elegantly, and so pathetically described by PLINY, that to add one word to his character would shew little relish of this incomparable epistle. Nor is there any room for observations on a letter so perspicuous, and so masterly in itself, unless we take notice of the following paragraph.

Et medici quidem secunda nobis pollicentur : sperest, ut promissis Deus adnuat : “ The physicians promise his recovery ; “ God permit those promises to be fulfilled.”

The heathen theology is one of those abstruse points of learning, left to be established from the imperfect accounts we have of it in antient authors. It is undeniable, that the heathens in general did believe a multiplicity of gods : yet this particular sentence in PLINY, and another in the twelfth epistle of this book, where he says, *affuit Deus voto*, (which is literally, “ God granted his prayer,”) appear to be strong instances, that the most thinking heathens did believe one supreme independent Being, to whom all worship and supplication ought to be ultimately addressed : and though they revered that one independent Deity by the name of JUPITER, yet it is impossible they could imagine him guilty of those strange follies, and monstrous vices, with which, in the course of their mythology, he is often taxed. HOMER and HERODOTUS have made him subject and inferior to fate. XENOPHON, says TULLY, makes SOCRATES sometimes declare there was one God, and sometimes that there were many. By these and innumerable other instances we are convinced, that the religion of the pagans was doubtful, unintelligible, incoherent, and irrational. Yet, it is evident from the sentence already quoted, that PLINY, by a superiority of judgement and reflection, believed human skill and medicinal art to be in vain, without the assistance of heaven, and the blessing of Almighty God.

EPISTLE XXIII.

PLINY to POMPEIUS FALCO.

YOU ask me, whether I think you ought to plead as a lawyer, whilst you are in the post of tribune. I should first know, what your opinion of the tribuneship is? Whether you look upon it as a mere shadow, an empty title without honour; or whether you esteem it an employment of power, and of a dignity so sacred, that it ought not to be violated by any person whatever, least of all by the person, who possesses it. Perhaps, I was in the wrong to think myself of any consequence, whilst I held that post; but, as I entertained that opinion, I would not be engaged as an advocate during the whole time of my tribuneship. First, I thought it extremely dishonourable, that I, to whom all people were to give place and to rise, should be obliged to stand, when every body about me sat. Nor did it seem a less impropriety, that the same person, who had the power of imposing silence upon whom he pleased, should himself be obliged to silence as soon as the hour-glass was out; or that I, who was never to be interrupted as tribune, should be forced as an advocate to hear reproaches thrown out against me, and be accused of want of spirit, if I suffered them, and of insolence, if I took proper notice of them. Another reason, that wrought strongly upon me, was this. If the client, whose cause I espoused, or his adversary, whom I opposed, happened to appeal to me in my tribunitial capacity; must I stop the one, and assist the other? Or should I acquiesce, and be quite silent, and thus, as it were, resign the magistracy, and sink myself at once into a private person? Convinced by these several reasons, I chose rather

ther to be a tribune to all, than an advocate to some few.

But, I must repeat it, your own opinion of the office, and the light in which you view it, ought to be fully known. For a wise man will always make it such, as he may be able to support with dignity from the beginning to the end. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

AS PLINY'S epistle to POMPEIUS FALCO treats entirely of the tribunitial authority, an account of the first creation of the tribunes may not be improper in this place.

From the beginning of the commonwealth so many imprudent steps had been taken by the senators, consuls, and dictators, and the people had been so hardly oppressed on account of their debts, that scarce the least appearance of honour, justice, or decency remained at *Rome*. The haughtiness of the patricians was odious; the disobedience of the plebeians dangerous: riches and pride were the characteristics of the former; poverty and rebellion of the latter: the authority of the senate was overthrown; the dignity of the consuls trampled upon and destroyed. If a plebeian was prosecuted for debt, the populace came in crowds into court, and by clamours hindered the sentence from being heard; and the decree, if pronounced, was not obeyed, nor attempted to be put into execution. Such heats could be only cooled by new laws, new foundations, and new magistrates.

The enemies of *Rome* never failed to exert themselves, as soon as the animosities and divisions in the republic were known, and divulged abroad. During the present infatuation, which infectiously spread itself over the whole species of Roman people, hostilities were begun by the *Æqui*, the *Sabines*, and the *Volsci*: they plundered villages, seized territories, and committed various depredations. In this exigence, a *dictator* was the most salutary relief. **MANIUS VALERIUS**, a plebeian in his inclinations, and brother of **PUBLICOLA**^p, was chosen *dictator*^q. The choice proceeded

^p The law of **PUBLICOLA** had given the first taste of power and impunity to the people.

^q A. U. C. 359.

from

from necessity, and was in itself contrary to an established law, which enacted, that no person, who had not been consul, should be appointed *dictator*. But laws were no longer remembered.

^a VALERIUS convened the populace, and in a speech delivered with an attractive modesty declared, that neither their liberties, nor the *lex Valeria*, the chief support of those liberties, were in the least hazard during his government: In the family of PUBLICOLA the rights of the people must be ever sacred: he scorned to delude with promises, or to deceive with falsehoods; but the first step to be taken was an immediate march against the enemy: however they might be confident, that at the end of the campaign they should infallibly be relieved from their debts, and receive full satisfaction to their complaints. These assurances he pronounced in his own name, and in the name of the senate.

Elate with the prospect of future relief, and conscious of the *dictator's* friendship, the people willingly enlisted themselves, and gained a consummate victory over their three neighbouring adversaries ^b. The senate apprehending, that the soldiers at their return might challenge the completion of those promises, which they had received from the *dictator*, desired VALERIUS, and the two consuls, to detain their several legions, under pretence that the war was not finished: the consuls obeyed, but the *dictator* disbanded his army, and declared his soldiers disengaged from the oath taken at the time of enlisting. As his power was absolute, and as he was warmly biassed in affection towards the people, he chose four hundred of the plebeians, and placed them in the rank of Roman knights. But when he demanded of the senators a decree in favour of the debtors, and consistent with the promise made by him, as from the senate, to abolish their debts, he met with opposition and reproach. APPIUS CLAUDIUS, supported by some of the

^a The *dictator* chose QUINTUS SERVILIUS as his general of the horse: he was of the same sentiments with VALERIUS, and thought the people too rigorously, and too unjustly oppressed. Thus the chief commanders were in the popular interest.

^b Ten legions were raised. Each consul commanded three: the *dictator* commanded the remaining four. The Sabines were conquered by the *dictator*: the Æqui and Volsci by the two consuls, A. VIRGINIUS and T. VETURIUS.

younger senators, refused absolutely to comply with his demand, and threatened to call him to an account for disbanding his army, while the enemies of *Rome* were yet in arms.

Is it not surprising, that so unlimited a magistrate as a *dictator* should meet with threats, opposition, and reproaches? His power was not only independent, but superior to any other power, derivative from *Rome*. May we not suspect, that when the army was disbanded, the fear of a *dictator* ceased? His soldiers, while in arms, secured his dignity: but the nature of his office approached too near a regal institution, to be relished, or respected in a commonwealth.

VALERIUS, surprised at so violent and so unprecedented a repulse, made a speech in the senate-house to this effect.

“The accusations against me of an ambitious popularity shew how unfortunate I am in not being agreeable to this assembly. May the Gods grant to all future defenders of the Roman people a moderation equal to my own!

“I will not deceive my fellow citizens: they depended on my promises: they took up arms, and triumphed over your enemies, at the peril of their lives. A foreign war, and domestic feuds, occasioned to me the honour of the *dictatorship*. We have now peace abroad: I have tried in vain to establish it at home: I am determined therefore to abdicate my dignity; chusing rather to behold sedition as a private man, than as a *dictator*.”

VALERIUS, at the conclusion of this short speech, left the senate, and convening an assembly of the people, appeared before them with all the ensigns of a *dictator*. His speech was of the same purport to the populace, as it had been to the senators, with some additions complaining of his age, whereby he was rendered incapable of proper resentment; and for that reason he freely resigned an employment, in which he could be, at his time of life, of no service to his friends and followers. The people heard him with the utmost respect and veneration: they conducted him home, and their applauses were as loud, as if he had exerted his authority, and had abolished their debts. Their clamours of applause shewed their indignation against the senate: their indignation scorned to be confined: they assembled publicly, and, in their rage, formed a conspiracy to murder the consuls; but this measure was disapproved, and another less sanguinary method was put into execution. The soldiers snatched up their ensigns, and by the advice of SICINNIUS

BELLUVUS, one of the chief leaders in the rebellion, they all retired to the farther side of the river *Anio*, fortifying themselves upon a hill, which is since called *mons sacer*.

This desertion occasioned the utmost surprize and uneasiness in the senate. Guards were placed not only for security of the city, but to prevent any citizens from passing over to the revolters. The precaution proved fruitless; many escaped, and the number of mutineers continually increased. A deputation was appointed from the senate to offer a general pardon, and to exhort the deserters to return. The deputies were sent back with contempt. In consequence of these indignities, new contests arose in the senate: **APPITIUS CLAUDIUS** talked boldly of opposition, punishment, and revênge. **VALERIUS** advised more lenient counsels; and proposed terms, that might immediately conduce to peace. The youngest senators were on the side of **APPITIUS**: they were particularly turbulent upon this occasion. They intimated suspicions of the consuls, to whom they declared, that if any insults were offered to the patricians, they would take arms in defence of an order and rank, which they had received from their ancestors. The consuls, to reduce these young patricians, whose clamours were growing too intolerable, threatened to deprive them of their right of suffrage, by fixing the age necessary to qualify a Roman to be a senator. The menace had the intended success: the senators began fresh negotiations, and sent fresh embassies with more extensive offers to the rebels. After a variety of proposals, and demands, all treaties at length appeared to be consummated by a consent from the senate to a total abolition of the plebeian debts: and now the revolters were preparing to return with satisfaction to *Rome*, when **LUCIUS JUNIUS BRUTUS**^a declared publicly his apprehensions, that the senators intended at a proper opportunity to revoke the present act of justice, although they now seemingly acquiesced in that agreement. He affected great fears from this surmise, which had arisen in his own breast. He expressed great diffidence of senatorial equity, and seemed to fore-

^a This hill is distant three miles from *Rome*, in the place where *Castello di San Silvestri* stands at present.

^b **LUCIUS JUNIUS BRUTUS** was a plebeian; a man of great ambition, particularly skilful in fomenting discord. He assumed the name of **BRUTUS**, in a vain emulation of equalling the first patrician of that name.

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see many dangers to the state, and many infringements upon the liberties of the people, unless some essential ties were established, that might infallibly preserve, and perpetuate their rights against the oppressions, and tyranny of the consuls and senate. To these artful insinuations MENEVIUS AGRIPPA candidly answered, "that the constitution of the republic was of such a nature, as must secure the ratification of any decree passed by unanimous consent. But if such a security was thought insufficient, he desired to know, what other expedient could be proposed, that might dissipate all anxiety arising from suspicion, and might firmly establish unanimity and friendship throughout every rank, and degree of the Roman people?" "Grant us," said BRUTUS, with a secret pleasure to find the immediate success of his own subtilty, "particular officers to be chosen out of our own order. Far be it from us to demand any pompous ensigns of magistracy. Pageants may appertain to patricians; but let a certain number of plebeians be elected every year, who may have authority to support our interests, and to defend us from injustice. The proposal is too equitable to be refused, if your real intentions of peace are as sincere as your outward professions."

This proposal, although it seemed the instantaneous answer to the speech of AGRIPPA, was certainly the effect of stratagem, and foresight. The people received it with the utmost joy and acclamation, the deputies from the senate with equal reluctance and surprize. They returned to Rome*, where the majority of the senators, actuated by fear and astonishment, and weary of perpetual divisions, consented to the demand; and at once divested themselves of all future authority. A *senatus consultum* was immediately passed, to appoint the creation of these new magistrates, who were called the *tribunes of the people*.

The decree of the senate having acquiesced to the tribuneship of the people, and to the total abolition of their debts, the olive branch of peace was carried by VALERIUS, and other deputed senators, to the camp upon the sacred moun-

* VALERIUS, at his return from the sacred mountain, made a speech in the senate strongly in favour of the revolted, whose military merit, he said, in the wars abroad was such, as ought to secure them not only from punishment, but entitle them to rewards and power at home.

tain.

tain. The new magistrates, two in number, were elected. Their persons were declared sacred: a law was enacted to punish with death any violence offered to a tribune. The Romans were obliged to swear a strict adherence to this law, not only in their own names, but in the names of their posterity: An absurd oath, attempting to bind a generation yet unborn. Not any of the historians mention, by what authority this law was established. The consuls, and major part of the senate, were still in *Rome*; but we may presume, the revolvers, who had now the power of making new magistrates, found no opposition in making new laws. When these statutes were fully ratified, the tribunes, the deputies, and the revolvers quitted the sacred mountain, and returned to *Rome*.

This was the greatest revolution, which *Rome* received, since the first formation of her government. The tribunes were magistrates superior to the consuls, as they were declared *sacrofancti* by the laws. Nothing relative to the people could be transacted, or at least fully confirmed without their consent: they signified their approbation, by putting the letter *T* under any order, that was agreeable to their will; as, on the other hand, they signified their prohibition, by standing up in the senate-house, and pronouncing the word *veto*, without being obliged to give any reason for their dissent.

After having dwelt, too long perhaps, upon the original institution of the tribunal authority, let us press forward, as fast as possible, to the diminution of their power under the emperors.

SUETONIUS tells us, that JULIUS CÆSAR was so jealous of PONTIUS AQUILA, one of the tribunes of the people, who refused to rise to him, as he passed, in the full glory of a triumph, by the place where the tribunes sat, that he cried out with great emotion, *Repete ergo a me, AQUILA, rempublicam tribunus*: “Come AQUILA, come, thou mighty
“tribune, and take the commonwealth out of my hands.” The same author adds immediately after, *Nec destiterit per continuos dies quidquam cuiquam nisi sub exceptione polliceri, si tamen per PONTIUM AQUILAM licuerit*: “And during
“many days after, he made no promises, but with this re-
“serve annexed to them, if PONTIUS AQUILA would give

[†] Suet. Jul. Cæsar. cap. 78.

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“ him leave :” an answer, that shewed at what he aimed. CÆSAR could not bear any limitation of his authority, and therefore with great art endeavoured to convince the people, that his dictatorial power was not compleat, till the tribunitial power was destroyed; and that even his promises could not be depended upon, because subject to the *Veto* of PONTIUS AQUILA.

AUGUSTUS, the child of fortune, lived to perfect what JULIUS had only designed. The words of TACITUS on this head are these. *Postquam BRUTO et CASSIO caesis nulla jam publica arma; POMPEIUS apud Siciliam oppressus; exutoque LEPIDO, interfecto ANTONIO, ne Julianis quidem partibus nisi CÆSAR dux reliquus; posito triumviri nomine consulem se ferens, et ad tuendam plebem tribunitio jure contentum:* “ When, upon the death of BRUTUS and CASSIUS, “ the civil wars were at an end; young POMPEY was over- “ thrown in *Sicily*; LEPIDUS was deprived of all power; “ ANTONY had fallen by his own sword; and of all the “ Julian party not one was left but their chief, OCTAVIUS “ CÆSAR; he, by laying aside the title of triumvir, ob- “ tained that of consul, and professed himself desirous of “ the tribunitial power, merely to defend and protect the “ people.” The use, which he made of that power, is perfectly well known: and because the tribunes ought al- ways to be elected out of plebeian families, AUGUSTUS, and the succeeding emperors, were not strictly tribunes, but *tribunitiâ potestate induti*. The name and shadow of the tribuneship remained; the substance and authority were taken away.

‡ Tacit. Annal, lib. I. cap. ii.

EPISTLE

EPISTLE XXIV.

PLINY to BEBIUS HISPANUS.

MY neighbour TRANQUILLUS has a mind to buy a small piece of land, which a friend of yours, as they tell me, is willing to sell. I must entreat you to take care, that the terms be equal on both sides; for at that rate only can the purchase be agreeable. A bad bargain vexes a man, chiefly because it seems a strong instance of his folly. In this little piece of ground there are several things (if the price is not too high) peculiarly adapted to the inclination of my friend TRANQUILLUS. The small distance from the city, the goodness of the road, the size of the house, and the quantity of land about it, which will prove rather a farm of retreat, than of employment: for, as TRANQUILLUS is a studious man, he should only have ground enough to exercise his fancy, and delight his eyes: A private walk, where he can saunter at his ease, from one end to the other, and trample out a path, in which he may view every branch of his vines, and number every shrub in his garden. I have told you all these particulars, that you may know how much he will be obliged to me, and how much I shall think myself so to you, if TRANQUILLUS makes this little purchase (attended with so many lucky circumstances) upon such conditions, as will leave him no room to repent of it. Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

Here are two great beauties in this epistle: the particular care, which PLINY takes, that his friend SÜETONIUS shall not be imposed upon in the purchase of an estate; and the agreeable description he gives of a philosopher's garden. The observation of our author, that a man is more uneasy

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at the disreputation he suffers, by being over-reached in a bargain, than by the loss he sustains, is extremely just. We can live without glory, but we cannot submit to shame: Those, who are really wise, would have no instance of their conduct appear to the contrary; and those, who are not so, try all methods to appear wiser than they are: and yet it is very certain, there are no people so easily led into disadvantageous contracts, as men of a studious and speculative disposition, who pass more time with their books, than with their friends, who converse more with the dead, than with the living, and who abstract themselves from the commerce of the world, and from those busy scenes of life, which prepare us against the various artifices of mankind: such men are fitter for the golden, than for the iron age.

The End of the FIRST BOOK.





PLINY'S EPISTLES.

BOOK II.

EPISTLE I.

PLINY to VOCONIUS ROMANUS.

MANY years have passed since so noble, or so memorable a spectacle has been exhibited to the eyes of the Roman people, as the public funeral of VERGINIUS RUFUS, a citizen great and eminent in his character, and equally happy in his fortune. He lived thirty years after having arrived at the height of glory. He read poems composed in his honour: he read histories compiled of his actions; he lived on, and enjoyed the praises of posterity. He passed through his third consulship, as if the man, who had refused the empire, was destined to rise as high as any other station would admit. Those

Those emperors, by whom he was suspected, and to whom his virtues were odious, he outlived : but left behind him the best of princes, and the kindest of friends ; reserved, as it were by fate, for this honour of a public funeral. He lived beyond his eighty third year, in the highest tranquillity of mind, and in equal veneration. He always enjoyed a perfect state of health, except that his hands trembled, but without giving him the least pain ; the approach of death was indeed a little severe and tedious, but even that last scene added to his character.

The manner of it was this. He was designed, a fourth time, to the consulship by TRAJAN : and the day, on which he waited upon the emperor, to return him thanks for that office, and was just beginning his speech ; a book, which he held in his hand, being so heavy for a man of his years, made weaker too by standing up, dropt from him, merely by its own weight : as he stooped to take it up, the pavement being smooth and slippery, he lost his footing, and by the fall broke his thigh : the bone was ill set ; and that, added to the disadvantage of his great age, hindered it from ever knitting, or being united again.

The obsequies of such a man have done great honour to the emperor, to the age, to the forum, and to the bar. CORNELIUS TACITUS, the consul, pronounced his funeral oration : so eloquent an orator, appointed upon such an occasion, seemed to crown the summit of all his happiness. And he departed full of years, and full of honours, even of those honours, which he had refused. But as to us, who survive, we must lament, we must wish for him, as an example of the primitive age ; and he is to be regretted by me in particular, who loved him, as much as I admired him, not only upon the public account ; but upon my own ; because, we were born in the same country, our native towns were near each other, and our estates were contiguous. Besides, he was left

left me as a guardian, and he loved me as a father; and from that tenderness, he favoured me with his vote, whenever I stood candidate for any employment, and hastened from his retirement to assist me, long after he had refused to attend upon the like occasions. Thus, on the day when the priests usually named those, whom they judged most worthy of the priesthood, he always nominated me.

In his last illness, when he was apprehensive, that he might probably be appointed one of the *quinqueviri*, who were constituted by an order of senate to retrench the public expences, he chose me out to make his excuses, and preferred me at my present age, before several of his friends, men of years, and even of consular dignity: and his choice was attended with this obliging expression: "Although I had a son, I would trouble you with this commission."

These are the reasons, why I pour out my whole torrent of tears into your bosom: these are the reasons, why I look upon his death as immature. Although, in my opinion, we ought neither to weep the death of such a man, nor to call it death, since it is rather an end of his mortality, than of his life. He lives, and will live to all eternity, he is snatched from our sight, but the impression of him will be the stronger in our memory, and his praises more frequent in our conversations.

I intended to have written to you upon many other subjects, but my whole soul is fixed upon this single contemplation. VERGINIUS is ever in my thoughts, VERGINIUS is ever before my eyes, I embrace VERGINIUS, I speak to him, I hear him; vain ideas! ever returning to my mind. We have, and shall have, many citizens equal to him in virtue, none in glory. Farewell,

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OBSERVATIONS.

Funeral obsequies never appear with more melancholy pomp, than when they are the last tribute paid by the public, to some eminent citizen, or some distinguished patriot. In such a loss a limb of the commonwealth is torn off, the whole body feels the wound, and every single member is more or less affected. Such a loss was VERGINIUS RUFUS; whose character seems, in certain particulars, to resemble that of MONK, *duke of Albemarle*. They were both generals in very tempestuous seasons. They had powerful forces at command, and they had great personal influence over their soldiers. Each might have raised himself by his military power to the throne. The distraction of the times threw uncommon temptations in their way. Crowns and scepters were within their reach; and they found themselves employed by the leading men in power, rather out of fear, than out of friendship; rather from necessity, than choice: yet such was the steadiness of the Roman, and such the integrity of the Briton, that the one submitted to see GALBA proclaimed emperor, the other brought CHARLES the second to *Whitball*. To continue the parallel, they were both men of a reserved nature, slow and cautious in the declaration of their purposes, but firm and resolute in the execution of their designs: they both died full of honours and full of years, and both were buried at the public charge.

The rites of sepulture were a most sacred, and essential part of the religion, subsisting among the heathens; and it must be allowed, that the institution of burying persons of remarkable virtue, and exalted merit, in the most public manner, and at the expence of the state, had in it something extremely noble, and highly becoming a brave people. The Romans never failed to perform these ceremonies; of which there cannot be a stronger instance than in the case of JULIA^a, a lady of great accomplishments, the wife of POMPEY, and the daughter of JULIUS CÆSAR. She died in child-bed, and POMPEY had given orders for her interment at *Alba*, amongst his ancestors; but the Roman people put a stop to his design, they seized the corps, and interred her with the highest honours, and the utmost mag-

^a See PLUTARCH'S Life of POMPEY.

nificence in the *field of MARS*. From the immature death of this excellent young lady, may be dated the miserable effects of the civil war: during the time she lived, by her dutiful behaviour to her father, and by her endearing affection to her husband, she kept up, and cemented an union betwixt CÆSAR and POMPEY, the breach of which proved afterwards fatal to themselves, but much more destructive to *Rome*.

There is one particular in this epistle, that adds great lustre to the character of VERGINIUS, *Ufus est firma valetudine; aditus tamen mortis durior longiorque, sed hic ipse laudabilis*: "He had enjoyed, during his whole life-time, an uninterrupted state of vigorous health, but the manner of his death was both painful and tedious. Upon this occasion he discovered so much constancy and resolution, that he drew upon himself the admiration and praise of all, who saw so melancholy an instance of his fortitude. Peevishness, and impatience, are too often concomitant to old age: we are then upon the borders of another world, and all pleasures and expectations in this life are over. Amusements, and the gay trifles of desire cease to charm: the fires of love are extinguished: ambition is no more: the spirits are decayed, the strength fails; and alas! what remains, is but labour and sorrow. These are the hard conditions, upon which we generally purchase the consummation of fourscore years. VERGINIUS, whom PLINY, throughout this epistle, describes as a man born under a very fortunate constellation, had escaped the miseries of age, and was enjoying the blessings of a gradual easy decay: but in the accident, that gave occasion to his death, an accident, which happened to him just as he received a fresh accumulation of honours, he was destined to undergo inexpressible torment. Here came on his hours of trial; when he was obliged to summon up all his philosophy, and to fortify himself with the armour of patience and resignation; which he did, and thereby acquired as much praise, as in any other part of his glorious life: so that upon the whole, we have, in the epistle before us, one of the most finished characters to be found among the ancients, a great and a good old man, who, by a rare felicity,

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Lenior et melior fuit accedente senectute.

Whose age but soften'd the rough parts away ;
As winter-fruits grow mild, when they decay *.

The latter part of this epistle carries in it sentiments of a most noble, tender, and virtuous disposition ; and the letter itself redounds more to the honour of PLINY, than of VERGINIUS. *Neceſſe eſt tanquam immaturam mortem ejus in ſenu tuo deſteam : ſi tamen fas eſt aus flore, aus omnino morient uocare, quã tanti viri mortalitas magis finita quam vita eſt :*
“ Though RUFUS, ſays our author, had paſſed his eighty
“ third year, yet I muſt look upon his death as untimely,
“ and I weep for him ; your boſom muſt receive my tears,
“ as for a friend, whom I have known too little, and whom
“ I have loſt too ſoon : *he ſhould have died hereafter :* yet, I
“ ought not to ſay he is dead ; ſuch a man can never die ;
“ he only breaks looſe from life, and ruſhes into immor-
“ tality.”

It would be needleſs to offer the leaſt comment upon the ſentences, which follow thoſe already quoted, and which cloſe this epistle. VERGINIUM *vide!* VERGINIUM *cegiſſe!* &c. The beſt and moſt laſting paraphraſe will immediately ariſe in the reader's own breaſt : for who has not loſt a friend ? and what country has not loſt a patriot ?

* Vide HORAT.

• Fern.

EPISTLE II.

PLINY to VALERIUS PAULLINUS.

I Am angry, I am not certain, whether I have reaſon for my anger, but I am angry. Love, you know, is ſometimes unreaſonable, often ungovernable, always jealous. The foundation of my anger is great : I know not if it be juſt ; but, I believe it no leſs juſt, than great. I am extremely incenſed, that I have received no letter from you, in ſo long a time : you have one way only to appeaſe me ; write often,

often, and let your letters be long : this is the single excuse I shall admit as real ; all others will appear to me frivolous. I will not hear the common evasions ; “ I was not at *Rome*, or I have had so much business :” Only the Gods forbid you should say, “ I have not been well.” I am, at my villa, sometimes very studious, sometimes very idle : leisure is the source of both. *Adieu.*

OBSERVATIONS.

What *TERENCE* says of love, may be applied to friendship ; especially as the latter, certain sensual appetites excepted, is the same passion as the former, and acts in the same manner upon the mind. *In amore hac omnia insunt vitia : injuria, suspiciones, inimicitia, inducia, bellum, pax, rursus :* “ in love are all these excesses united : provocations, suspicions, resentments, returns of affection ; now war, then peace.” And accordingly, *PLINY* begins his letter with all the seeming anger of disappointed friendship ; doubts and distrust usher in the first part, and flashes of resentment succeed them. He denounces war against *PAULLINUS* ; and resolves to accept of no terms of accommodation, unless past neglects are repaired by a future punctual correspondence. Long and constant must be the letters, that are to purchase the least hopes of reconciliation. But when, upon recollection, our tender-hearted author begins to imagine, that possibly his friend may have been indisposed, he melts at once, and all is peace again. *Illud enim nec Diis finant, ut,* *INFIRMIOR.* “ The Gods forbid, that illness should have hindered me from the happiness of hearing from you : I can bear any other excuse : let my friend enjoy his health, and I will complain no more.” Here, we see the flux and reflux of affection ; the ebbings and flowings of social love ; which appear like a calm evening tide, that seems to depart slowly and unwillingly from the shore, but returns again with double force, and all the impetuosity of a swelling sea.

Friendship is of so delicate and so nice a texture, so defenceless against evil impressions, and so apt to wither at the least blast of jealousy, that we may say with *HORACE,*

Ter. Eunuch. Act. 1. Scen. 1.

Felices

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*Felices ter, et amplius,
Quos irrupta tenet copula; nec malis
Divulsus querimoniis,
Suprema citius solvet amor die.**

“ Happy, thrice happy they, whose friendships prove
“ One constant scene of unmolested love;
“ Whose hearts right temper'd feel no various turns;
“ No coolness chills them, and no madness burns.
“ But, free from anger, doubts, and jealous fear,
“ Die as they liv'd, united and sincere.”

The love betwixt friends is certainly most harmonious, when wound up to the highest pitch; but, at that very time, is in greatest danger of breaking: and upon the whole, the strongest friendships may be compared to the strongest towns, which are too well fortified to be taken by open attacks, but are always liable to be undermined by treachery, or surprize.

PAULLINUS, to whom this epistle is addressed, was the particular friend of VESPASIAN, and from that motive, became one of the chief instruments in divesting VITELLIUS of the imperial dignity, and in conferring the empire upon VESPASIAN. His friendship also to PLINY must have been remarkable, since, at his death, he bequeathed by will, all his freedmen to our author; well knowing the happiness they were certain to enjoy, under such a master †.

* Hor. Ode 13. Lib. 1.

† See Book 10. Ep. 112.

EPISTLE III.

PLINY to NEPOS.

THE fame of ISÆUS was great, before he appeared among us; and yet, by his presence, he has surpassed all expectation. His faculties, his powers, and his wit, are inexhaustible; his speeches are unpremeditated, and yet appear as correct, as if they had been long composed: his style is Grecian; true Attic;

Attic: his introductions are neat, elegant, and engaging; sometimes weighty and sublime: he exhibits many themes for controversy, and permits his audience to choose the theme, upon which he shall speak; nay, often leaves to his audience, which side of the controversy he shall maintain. He rises, he adjusts his vestments, he begins with as much fluency, as if all subjects were prepared to his hands: his sense is sound and deep, and his expressions occur with ease, expressions exquisitely polite. His most sudden discourses shew, that he has employed much time in reading and writing. He opens his speeches with great address; his narrations are clear, his disquisitions sharp, his conclusions strong, and the ornamental part extremely high finished: in a word, he instructs, he delights, and he conquers; and, which you can scarce bring yourself to believe, as his reasonings and reflexions are very just, so he frequently mixes syllogistical arguments in his discourse, all close and to the purpose; which it is difficult to do, even in composition. His memory is so incredible, that he can repeat over again his extemporary orations without missing a word: To such a habit has he attained by study and practice; for he exercises himself in this manner, without giving the least attention to any thing else, night and day. He is turned of sixty, and is still but a rhetorician in the schools. It is in that species of men we find a simplicity, a sincerity, and a goodness, no where to be exceeded: for we, who are versed in the *forum*, and in real causes, contract a certain habitual rancour, even against our will: but in the schools and halls of rhetoric, as the cause is always feigned, so the conduct of it is harmless and free from malice; a very fortunate circumstance, particularly to old men. For what can be a greater happiness to age, than to enjoy the unmolessted freedom of youth? For these reasons I look upon ISÆUS not only as the most eloquent, but the

most happy man in the world. And, if you are not impatient to be known to him, you are made either of iron or stone. If therefore you have no other call, if you are not inclined to come to see me, at least come to hear *ISÆVUS*. Have you never read, that a citizen of *Gades*, fired with the name and high character of *LIVY*, came from the farthest confines of the globe to see him, and having seen him, immediately returned back again satisfied? It would betray a want of taste, and learning; it would be an unpardonable laziness, nay, almost an irreparable disgrace, not to covet the acquaintance of so great a man; an acquaintance, that must be at once agreeable, honourable, and instructive. You will answer; "I have here with me authors not in the least inferior to him in learning, and those I read." True: But the opportunity of reading is always in your power; the opportunity of hearing is not. Besides, according to the proverb; "What the ear hears, stands in no need to be guessed at." And, suppose what you read in itself more affecting, yet certainly the pronunciation, the countenance, the dress, the gesture of an orator, imprint his lessons more deeply upon the mind: unless we are of opinion, that what *ÆSCHINES* told the Rhodians, when he read to them the oration of *DEMOSTHENES*, was false. The Rhodians charmed with the oration, gave the highest signs of applause; upon which it is reported, that the Athenian cried out, "What would you have said, had you heard that furious beast roar out his own words!" And *ÆSCHINES*, if we may believe *DEMOSTHENES*, was an orator most powerful in his elocution. Yet, he allowed the same things to have been much better pronounced by him, who had conceived them. To what purpose have I writ this letter? To persuade you to attend *ISÆVUS*, or at least to hear him once, that you may have it in your power to say you have heard him. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The arts of rhetoric were the first steps to eloquence. They were the foils with which young orators began, and by which they learned to manage sharper weapons, and to gain victories in the *forum* and at the bar. "Rhetoric, says Lord BACON, "is subservient to the imagination, as logic "is to the understanding." Or, to quote the words of another author, "Rhetoric and oratory differ, as the theory "from the practice; the rhetorician teaches the rules of "eloquence, the orator uses them to advantage." Notwithstanding these definitions, the two terms are promiscuously applied. But ISÆUS, who is now before us, never appeared at the bar; he taught in the schools, and exercised his eloquence there only. No motives could induce him to plunge himself into the iniquitous practices of the *forum*, where justice and reason were often trampled upon by tyranny and power; and where the laws of the public were forced to give way to the spleen and resentment of particular men: *Quare ego ISÆUM non disertissimum tantum, verum signis beatissimum judico*: "And therefore, says PLINY, I do not "look upon ISÆUS as the wisest, but as the happiest man I "know." Our author a little before remarks, *Nos, qui in foro verisque litibus terimur, multum malitiæ, quamvis volumus, addiscimus*: "It is impossible for us lawyers, to preserve "ourselves entirely free from bias and prepossession: "our disputes are in earnest, and we are carried greater "lengths by our passions, than we ought to go: whereas, "the rhetoricians speak only in causes, which are feigned "and imaginary; and consequently create no enemies, be- "cause they do no wrong: and I have observed, that "they are men of great evenness of temper, great sincerity, "and great uprightness. Their souls are clear from the "burdens, with which our consciences are perpetually op- "pressed."

Though PLINY speaks to this purpose, and allows room for this paraphrase; yet we may be sure he was guilty of no cruel, no unjust, no base action whatsoever. As he was a lawyer, he joins himself with his brethren, and writes in the plural number.

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Quæ omnia hæc tendunt; ut audias ISÆUM: vel ideo tantum, ut audieris. This last sentence in the epistle will admit of a different interpretation, from that which is already inserted: "My letter, says PLINY, tends to two purposes; either to induce you to hear ISÆUS at Rome; or, at least, to make you so perfectly acquainted with his person, and manner of elocution, that you may seem to have heard him."

EPISTLE IV.

PLINY to CALVINA.

HAD your father died in debt to many people, or had owed to any one person so much as to me; it would have been a doubt, perhaps, whether you ought in prudence to have undertaken the execution of his will; an act, that might have drawn even a man into difficulties. But when I, led by the consideration of our affinity, had paid off all the rest; who were more importunate, I will not say more troublesome, and remained the only creditor, and had contributed a hundred thousand sesterces* towards your marriage portion, besides that sum, which, as your father expressed himself, was in a manner to be paid out of my effects, for indeed it was to be raised from what was due to me, you had a strong proof of my easy disposition, and should have relied on it so far, as to have defended the reputation and honour of your deceased parent: and, that I may not exhort you to such an action more by words than by deeds, I acquit you, from this moment, of whatever was due to me from your father. Be not in the least apprehensive, that such a present will fall too heavy upon me: it is true, my income is moderate, and yet my dignities are expensive; and I know not whether the revenues of my estate are

* Equal to 807 l. 5 s. 10 d.

less in value, or more uncertain, from the situation of it. But, whatever is wanting in income, is made up in oeconomy ; which, like a spring, supplies a constant stream to my liberality. However, my bounties ought to be such, as not to exhaust by profusion the fountains, from whence they rise : to all others, they shall be kept within bounds : but I shall stand sufficiently justified, if to you they are suffered to overflow. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

Among the Romans, the *hæredes*, or heirs, were distinguished under three denominations : They were either *necessarii*, *sui et necessarii*, or *extranei*.

The *hæres necessarius* was a bondman^s, instituted heir ; and who acted as such, whether he would or not, and had his freedom constantly, and of course given to him, for his having been involved in that trouble ; the word *hæres* not being confined to the inheritance of land only, but also to the personal effects.

The *hæredes sui et necessarii* were all the children of the deceased, whether males or females : and they were obliged to act as such, unless disinherited for some just cause, nor had it in their power to refuse the execution of that office, but by a particular permission from the *prætor*.

The *extranei* were those, who were neither *bondmen*, nor under the power of the *testator* ; and who might act, or not act, as they thought fit.

CALVINA was appointed *hæres* by the will of her father, and therefore was *hæres sua et necessaria* ; but, she being apprehensive, that her father's effects were not sufficient to answer his debts, was desirous to avoid the trouble of proving the will, and intended to gain a permission from the *prætor*, to disengage herself from acting as executrix, and to have a bondman appointed to ease her of that burden.

^s The reason expressly given for this institution is this. " Those, who died much in debt, used to appoint a bondman heir, that in some measure the reproach of poverty might fall upon the bondman, and that the creditors might seize those goods, which seemed rather to belong to their heir, than to the testator."

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PLINY unwilling, that the least reproach should fall upon the memory of his deceased friend, presses the daughter to undertake the execution of her father's will; *Debes famam defuncti pudoremque suscipere*: "You ought, says he, to undertake the defence of your father's reputation, and to screen his memory from the scandal and reproach of poverty." To induce her to tread in the path of honour, which he here points out, we behold him acting in a manner so uncommonly benevolent, that in all antiquity there are few examples to equal it. But the particular acts of generosity are so clearly expressed, and so sensibly notified in this epistle, that they neither want a comment, nor require a recommendation. They must charm every reader; and those, who care not to imitate, will at least be obliged to applaud the unlimited greatness of PLINY'S soul.

EPISTLE V.

PLINY to LUPERCUS.

THE speech, which you have so often implored me to communicate, and which I have as often promised you, I now send; but you have it incomplete: the remainder in my hands still wants the last polish. In the mean time, I thought it not amiss to submit such parts to your judgement, as seem to me most finished and correct. I entreat you will apply your attention to these papers with as scrupulous a nicety, as if you yourself were the author. Nothing I have ever yet composed demanded from me a greater degree of exactness. In my other speeches I hoped to gain some reputation, by my diligence and by my integrity; but in this, by the love, which I manifested for my country. From which last motive, my book has swelled to a considerable bulk. For, whilst I took pleasure in heightening the beauties of my native soil, and in setting her forth in all her pomp of charms, I thought it my duty also to defend her honour, and to exalt her glory. However, pray reduce it, as you shall think

think reasonable. For, when I consider the censorious disposition, and the delicacy of most readers, I am sensible, that I ought to look for part of my praise from the moderate size of my book.

Yet, what will seem strange to you, and indeed very inconsistent with this request, is, that notwithstanding the severity I have required from you, I am obliged to insist, that you will let many things pass uncriticised. For, there is great indulgence to be given to youthful readers, especially where the subject will permit it. For example; the description of places, which you will frequently meet with throughout the book; may not only be painted in an historical, but in a poetical manner. But if any one should imagine, that in this instance, I have soared into unwarrantable flights, not altogether consistent with the seriousness of an oration, permit me to say to that grave person, that there are other parts of the speech exactly fitted to the solemnity of his disposition; which ought to mitigate the severity of his censure. I have endeavoured, as much as possible, to engage different sorts of readers by different sorts of style; for, as on one hand, I have reason to fear, that particular parts may not please particular people, from the peculiar turn of their disposition; so, on the other hand, I have reason to hope, that the great variety in my speech may make it acceptable to all. Writing is like making an entertainment, for although every man does not taste every dish, we all join to praise the supper in general; nor are we less pleased with those things, which are agreeable to our appetite, because there are others, which our appetite cannot relish. In the same manner I would have this performance relishable to every palate; not that I flatter myself with a belief of having reached this perfection: I am only sure, that I tried to reach it; and perhaps not in vain, if you will exert your diligence in revising the papers, which I now send you,

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and these, which shall soon follow. Here, you will say, it is impossible to correct in the manner you ought, without seeing the whole speech together. I confess it; but whilst these imperfect sheets lie before you, they will become more and more familiar to your observations; and some of them are of such a nature, that they may be separately corrected. Thus, if you saw a head, or any other member, disjointed from a compleat statue, you could not indeed from thence judge of the symmetry and proportion of the whole figure, but you might judge of the exactness of that particular part. This is the reason, that specimens of books are handed about; because some parts of a subject may be looked upon as compleat, though unconnected with the rest. I find the pleasure of talking to you has led me farther, than I intended to go. I will therefore conclude, lest I exceed in a letter the bounds, which I would prescribe even to an oration. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

By this letter we find, that PLINY having made a speech in honour of his native country *Comum* desires LUPERCUS to look over that part of it, which he sends him, and to render it as correct as possible. We have seen several of PLINY's preceding letters much to the same purpose. It was a constant rule with him to be extremely solicitous for his works, before they appeared, and to read them to the most competent judges he could select among his acquaintance, that they might come out perfectly accurate, and worthy the reception of the public. This is what every writer ought to do.

Trust not yourself, but your defects to know,
Make use of every friend, and every foe *.

But the misfortune is, that those, who want most correction, can least bear it, and are least improved by it: Like

* POPE'S Essay on criticism.

asses, they kick at the spur, but move not one step forwards. However it must be allowed, that the best authors are often too partial to their own works. This epistle is liable to objections: while PLINY is intreating LUPERCUS to make his book less, he is likewise attempting to defend every part of it, and has something to say in vindication of each particular subject it contains: so that he seems rather desirous to have the matter of it corrected, than the size of it reduced. There is certainly too much room for such a remark; and it may be further said, that he flatters himself with a very wild expectation of pleasing all the world. But there would be no end of such criticisms: one tender sentiment, one generous thought, or one high-finished character, makes amends for a thousand errors of this kind, which flow from the same prejudice in an author towards his works, as in a parent towards his child, a certain blind affection, that takes rise in nature, and is generally carried to excess.

EPISTLE VI.

PLINY to JUNIUS AVITUS.

IT would be too tedious, nor is it of any great consequence to tell you, how I, (not overapt to run into familiarities,) happened to sup at the house of a certain person, who, in his own opinion, makes a most elegant figure, and sets up for an excellent oeconomist; but who, in my opinion, is both fordid and extravagant. To himself, and to a few of his select friends, were served up several rarities; but to the rest of the company nothing but what was cheap and common, and not enough even of that. Three different sorts of wine made their appearance in three different sorts of bottles; not to furnish us with the liberty of our choice, but to deprive us of the right of refusing; for one sort was for himself, and for us; another sort was for his minor friends, (for it seems he has degrees of friends) and the third for his own freedmen and ours. During the supper, my next neighbour

neighbour asked me, if I approved of this method? I answered, No. What is your own way then? says he: I replied, When I make an invitation, all are served alike: I invite them with a design to entertain, not to affront them; and those I think worthy of a place at my table, I certainly think worthy of every thing it affords. What, says he, your freedmen? Yes: for on such an occasion I look upon them as my guests, not as my freedmen. Your suppers must then be very expensive? No: quite the contrary. How can that be? Very easily: my freedmen do not drink the same wine as I; but I drink the same wine as my freedmen: and in truth, if you are not very delicate, it is no great expence to let all your guests eat and drink at your table, in the same manner as yourself. If you are inclined to save expences, keep your appetite within bounds, and reduce your desires into regularity; by which means your own temperance will guide you into a much better oeconomy, than this haughty treatment of other people.

But, to what purpose are all these particulars? That a young man, of so excellent a disposition as you are, should not be betrayed into the imitation of certain persons, who are infinitely extravagant under the specious appearance of frugality. It is consonant to the affection I bear you, that, whenever any example of this kind falls in my way, I should set it before you, as a necessary caution for your own conduct. Remember therefore, that nothing ought to be more carefully avoided, than this new fashioned mixture of luxury and fordidness; two vices, which are most abominable, even when separate and asunder; but infinitely worse, when joined together. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

There are no two vices, that seem more directly opposite, and yet are more firmly united, than avarice and prodigality. They often dwell in the same breast, and take equal possession of the same heart. From this unnatural union, is constantly formed a strange kind of animal, exactly such a creature, as is described in this epistle, whose soul, like a motley coat, is a mixture of various pieces, and of different colours: it is proud and submissive, slavish and assuming, ostentatious and niggardly, ignorant and vain, an economist and a spendthrift, an alms-giver and a cheat, and, upon the whole, a vile composition of halves, making, when joined together, one of the most hideous monsters in the world. "A monster, says ARISTOTLE, is a defect of nature, when acting towards some end, she cannot attain to it, because some of the principles are corrupted." This is an exact definition of the person, described in this epistle; who attempted to appear full of generosity and prudence, but was too corrupt to be perfect in any good quality whatever. The distinction he made in his guests, and the different sorts of wine he gave them, discovered that kind of avarice, which attempts to pass upon the world for frugality; every vice trying to screen itself behind a neighbouring virtue. A man of sense and spirit would have chosen guests, either equally dear to him, or of equal rank among themselves. I am apt to think, that at this variegated supper, when we have excepted PLINY, the best hearts, and the best heads, were to be found amongst those, who sat at the lower end of the table, and shared the worst part of the feast.

The motives, that induced our author to write this letter, and to describe this absurd entertainment, are extremely correspondent with all the rest of his sentiments. AVITUS was a young Roman of great hopes, and very promising qualifications. PLINY could no where have chosen a fitter object for his affection: and we see him amicably solicitous, that his rising genius should avoid the rocks and quicksands, upon which others, at his time of life, are too apt to split. He sets forth the baseness of avarice, and the vain-glory of profuseness, with a spirit and disdain, which becomes him; and he recommends temperance and frugality,

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

lity, the true sources of long health and long happiness, in a manner most likely to make an impression upon AVITUS. He assures him, that the epistle was written purely upon his account, and from a friendly desire of pointing out to him the beauties of virtue, and the deformities of vice: but alas! the letter, the precepts, and the friendship were all bestowed in vain. JUNIUS AVITUS was cut off in the spring of his age, and the dawning of his virtues; and we shall find PLINY, in the eighth book of these epistles, weeping over his ashes.

EPISTLE VII.

PLINY to MACRINUS.

Yesterday the senate decreed a triumphal statue to VESTRITIUS SPURINNA; the emperor having been the first, who proposed it. An honour not bestowed upon him as on many, who never were in an army, never saw a camp, nor ever heard a trumpet, except at the public diversions; but as on those, who had acquired it by their sweat, their wounds, and their heroism: for SPURINNA placed the king of the *Brueri* upon his throne by force of arms, and then tamed that savage nation into obedience, by the most eligible kind of victory, terror, and the outward shew and pomp of war.

This was a reward due to the valour, which he shewed upon many remarkable occasions: and, as a consolation to his grief, the honour of a statue was decreed also to his son COTTIUS, whom he lost during his absence. Young men have seldom been thus distinguished; but the merits of the father claimed this honour for the son, whose death was too deep a wound not to require some very asswaging remedy. Besides, COTTIUS himself had given so noble a specimen of his disposition, that his life, short and limited as it was, deserved to be lengthened out by this kind of immortality. There was so much upright-

ness,

ness, such a composure, so much dignity in his behaviour, that he might have challenged in virtue much older men; whom he now equals in honours: Honours, in which, according to my way of thinking, not only the memory of the dead, and the grief of the father, but the force of example likewise were considered.

Rewards of this high nature, conferred on young persons, if they are deserving, will raise a spirit of emulation in our youth, to apply themselves to the liberal arts. Our great men will likewise be excited to raise families, since they will receive such pleasure from the lives of their children, and so much honour and comfort in case of their death. For these reasons, on the public account, the statue of *CORNIUS* gives me great pleasure, and, on a private account, no less; for I loved this most accomplished youth, as sincerely, when alive, as I now wish for him impatiently, when dead. It will therefore afford me a most satisfactory consolation, to consider his statue with attention, to stand under it, and to walk to and fro before it. For, if the statues of our dead friends, when put up in our own houses, alleviate our grief; how much more must it be lessened by their statues conspicuously erected in public places; where not only their figure and their countenance, but also their honour and their glory are represented! Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

The character of *SPURINNA* will be found in the first epistle of the third book: but the description, given of him there, is in his private capacity, and in his domestic scene of life, at a time when he had hung up his arms, and was retired to his plough. Here his picture is drawn in the attitude of a patriot, a soldier, and a conqueror. And he was now returning home crowned with laurels, and loaded with

with renown; but unfortunate, amidst all these honours, in the loss of a hopeful son.

We find SPURINNA particularly mentioned by TACITUS, as one of the most considerable men in OTHO's party, during the civil wars between that emperor and VITELLIUS. But in this expedition against the *Bructeri*, he had no occasion to come to a battle: those barbarians yielded to him as soon as he approached their borders: they were terrified at his name: they dreaded the valour of his troops, and they had experienced his own courage, and his conduct; and therefore they not only received their king from him, but quietly returned to their former government.

The *Bructeri* were a people of Germany, who lived by war and plunder: and their boundaries were so often changed, according to their conquests, or defeats, that the exact limits of their territories are very difficult to be ascertained. CAUVDIAN says, they inhabited the *Hercynian* forest:

*Venit accola sylvæ
Bructerus Hercyniæ* *.

According to CÆSAR this forest was of vast extent. His words are these: ¹ *Hujus Hercyniæ sylvæ latitudo ix. dierum iter expedito patet. Non enim aliter finire potest, neque mensuras itinerum noverunt. Oritur ab Helvetiorum et Nemetum et Rauracorum finibus, rœtisque fluminis Danubii regione pertinet ad fines Dacorum et Avartium: hinc se scedit, sinistrorsus, diversis à flumine regionibus, multarumque gentium fines propter magnitudinem attingit. Neque quisquam est hujus Germaniæ, qui se aut adisse ad initium ejus sylvæ dicat, quum dierum iter lx. processerit, aut, quæ ex loco oriatur, acceperit. Multa in ea genera ferarum nasci, constat, quæ reliquis in locis visa non sint.*

The modern situation is thus given to us in Mr. BLADEN's translation.

“ * The Hercynian forest is nine days journey over in breadth; for I cannot compute it any other way, because the Germans are ignorant of the use of measure: it commences in the confines of Switzerland, Basle, and Spiers,

* iv Consul. Honor. 7. 450.

¹ Cæsar de Bello Gallico. Lib. 6. cap. 25.

* BLADEN'S Cæsar, Book 6. chap. 40.

“ and

“ and extends along the river *Danubs* as far as *Transylvania* ;
 “ then turning from the river to the left, it runs through an
 “ infinite number of countries ; nor is there any German
 “ that has travelled through it, or knows its utmost extent,
 “ though several have gone sixty days journey in it. In
 “ this wood are several kinds of wild-beasts, which are not
 “ to be met with elsewhere.”

A people bred up in woods, and nursed among wild
 beasts, must be naturally rude, fierce, and untamed : and
 nothing can give us a higher idea of *VESTRICIUS SPURIN-*
NA, than to see these savages tremble at his appearance, and
 lose their ferocity of temper at his approach. The music of
ORPHEUS had no greater influence upon dumb brutes, than
 the presence of *SPURINA* had upon those in human shape.

In the early days of the republic, when justice was admi-
 nistered most religiously, and rewards distributed most im-
 partially, statues and honours of all kinds were decreed with
 a very steady and a very sparing hand. *LIVY*, speaking of
L. FURIUS CAMILLUS and his colleague *C. MÆNIUS*, both
 consuls in the year four hundred and seventeen, says, ¹ *Ad-*
ditus triumpho honos, ut statuæ equestres eis, rara illâ ætate
res, in foro pmerentur : “ An additional honour graced the
 “ triumph, that equestrian statues should be placed in the
 “ forum ; an unusual favour in that age.” *PLINY* the elder
 speaks to the same purpose in the fourth^m chapter of his
 thirty fourth book. But in the times of luxury, avarice,
 and injustice, statues lost their intrinsic value, and were to
 be purchased by money, not by merit.

Triumphales, inter quas ausus habere
Nescio quis titulos Ægyptius atque Arabarchasⁿ.

Behold the statues, where amidst the race
 OF conquering *Rome*, some Arab shews his face,
 Inferib'd with titles, and profanes the placeⁿ.

When honours of any sort are prostituted, they are
 changed into marks of infamy and disgrace ; and will be

¹ *Livii*, lib. 8. cap. 13.

^m *Effigies hominum non solebant exprimi nisi aliqua illustri causâ.*

ⁿ *JUVENAL*, Satir. I. v. 129.

• *DRYDEN*'s *JUVENAL*. Satir. 1. v. 495.

looked upon by every honest mind with horror and disdain : they are no longer badges of dignity, but yokes of servitude ; no longer the price of virtue, but the bribes of vice. They degenerate into the accoutrements of knaves and fools, and become the signs and tokens to distinguish the corrupt, from the incorrupt, the *Catilines* from the *Catos*. But on the other hand, when honours, as in the days of TRAJAN, flow in a pure channel, and spring from a fountain, that is clear and unfullied, who is not glad to approach the stream ? And PLINY in his panegyric, a work of study and labour, has been able to say nothing, that redounds more to the praise of his imperial master, than what he has cursorily said in this epistle ; where we may discover such a mixture of compassion and good-nature, joined to so much equity and public spirit, and so noble a design of exciting young men to an early thirst of glory, as must render the name of TRAJAN for ever revered and admired. Not content with erecting a triumphal statue to SPURINNA, the emperor endeavours to dry up the father's tears, by bestowing equal honours upon the son, and decrees a statue to COTTIUS, at an age when his years had permitted him only to begin the race of virtue, and not reach the goal.

EPISTLE VIII.

PLINY to CANINIUS RUFUS.

ARE you studying ? Are you fishing ? Are you hunting ? Or are you taking these several diversions at once ? which you may easily do in our country about the *Larian lake*. The lake itself affords fish ; the woods with which it is surrounded, wild beasts ; and the retreat, in which you live, sufficient solitude for study. But whether you exercise yourself in these diversions all at once, or whether you are attached to any one of them in particular ; I cannot say, I envy you. However, I must own I am vexed to be debarred from pleasures, which I as eagerly thirst after, as a man in a fever pants for wine, cold baths and spring water. If I cannot loose these

these cords that fetter me, shall I never be able to break them? Indeed I believe not. New scenes of business rise upon the old, nor are the first dispatched till I am embarrassed by fresh employments, as so many additions to my bonds, and so many links to my chain. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

Here PLINY shews great impatience to quit the hurry of business, and to enjoy some of those pleasures which the *Larian lake* affords. "I do not envy you, says he to CARNINIUS, in your diversions, happily situated as you are, upon the borders of our *Larian lake*, a place, which, to my knowledge, abounds with all the rural amusements you can desire. The envy of my heart can never rise from your happiness: yet give me leave to say, I wish myself with you; for in the situation I now am, I lead a life very different from yours, and move on in a tedious track of business, without the least hopes of coming to my journey's end. If I look forward, new difficulties still present themselves; and yet a man in a fever is not more impatient for drink, than I am for liberty; a blessing, which, in all probability, I languish after in vain. Farewell.

Not to trouble the reader with any more remarks upon *Comum*, which has been already specified as the birth place of PLINY, and the town which gives name to the *Lago di Como*, we may observe, that this letter was certainly dated from *Rome*, and probably written at the beginning of TRAJAN's reign; when PLINY was one of the commissioners of the treasury of SATURN, an employment, for which he was more fitted by his abilities, than by his inclination. The philosophic turn of his mind, had he suffered it to have broken in upon his duty to his country and to his master, would have led him from noise and business, to groves and gardens, from the muddy river *Tiber*, to the silver *Larian lake*.

EPISTLE IX.

PLINY to APOLLINARIS.

THE petition of my friend **SEXTUS ERUCIUS** has thrown me into a state of great anxiety and inquietude. I am overwhelmed with care; and I have never suffered so much upon my own account, as I now feel for my second self. Besides, my credit, my reputation; and my dignity, are in some measure at stake. I obtained from our emperor a place in the senate, and afterwards the questorship for **SEXTUS**. It is by my interest he is now permitted to petition for the tribuneship: and unless he carries it in the senate, I am afraid I shall appear to have given a false character of him to **TRAJAN**. I must therefore endeavour to make all other people view him in the same advantageous light, in which I represented him to the emperor. But if even this reason had no weight with me, I should certainly desire to be of service to a young man, whose probity, behaviour, and learning, cannot be too much admired. Nor are his relations less eminent; for his father **ERUCIUS CLARUS** is a man of great morality, primitive worth, and polite elocution; having been a long practitioner in pleading, and always appearing in defence of his client with the utmost probity and resolution, and no less modesty. He has an uncle, **CALUS SEPTITIUS**, who, I think, cannot be exceeded either in veracity, candor, or sincerity. The whole family contend with, and equal, each other in their love of me; and now I have an opportunity, by obliging one to repay them all. So at present I am earnestly employed in soliciting the votes of my friends: I go to their houses, I beset the chief places of their resort, I canvass every one, and I try, by my entreaties, how far my interest and credit can possibly

possibly prevail. To you also I must become a supplicant, that you would take a part in the affair. I will return the favour, if ever you desire me: nay, I will return it, though you should not desire me. Many people love you, admire you, and visit you: only shew how well you are inclined to SEXTUS ERUCIUS, and numbers will never be wanting to follow the bent of your inclinations. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This letter displays the just pride of an honest heart. PLINY looks upon his own character and reputation to be deeply concerned in the success of SEXTUS ERUCIUS, and at the same time thinks himself under high obligations to the whole *Erucian* family; all which he is eager to repay, by obtaining the tribuneship for his much esteemed friend SEXTUS.

A good man scorns to be outdone in acts of friendship: he is impatient to refund his debts of honour; and knows no greater uneasiness, than the want of opportunities to put his gratitude in full force: But to examine this epistle more closely.

Afficio curâ, et quam pro me sollicitudinem non adii, quasi pro me altero patior: "I undergo, says PLINY, an inexpressible anxiety of mind, and suffer more for the man I love, than I have felt for myself throughout the whole course of my life."

Whoever is capable of friendship will be extremely pleased with this sentiment, as thoroughly corresponding with the dictates of his own heart: for friendship, like inspiration, drives us forward with resistless impetuosity, and makes us act and feel for others with different and more violent agitations, than we have ever felt for ourselves.

Ego SEXTO latum clavum a Cæsare nostro, ego quaesturam impetraui: "I obtained from our emperor the senatorial tunic, and I also obtained from him the quaestorship for SEXTUS."

The *latus clavus* was a robe only worn by consuls, prætors, generals in triumph, senators, who are thence often called *latilavii*, or their sons^p. But the emperors had a power to

^p Vid. SUTTON. in vit. AUGUSTI. cap. 38.

bestow this garment of distinction, and all privileges belonging to it, upon whomsoever they thought worthy of that honour. So that ERUCIUS received this robe entirely from TRAJAN'S favour, and PLINY'S friendship : which was a right founded upon merit and virtue, and consequently preferable to any right he could have claimed from his ancestors.

No person could enjoy the employment of *quæstor*, till he was turned of twenty five or twenty seven years : for authors are not agreed as to the exact age, unless the emperor, as in this case, interposed. The *quæstores ærarii* were answerable to our lords of the treasury : and SEXTUS was every way qualified for so great a trust.

Meo suffragio pervenit ad jus tribunatum petendi ; quem nisi obtinet in senatu, vereor ne decepisse Cæsarem videar. : " At my instigation, he now puts in his claim of petitioning for the tribuneship : which, if he should lose in the senate, I am apprehensive our royal master may imagine I have deceived him, first in giving my friend too good a character, and then in representing my own interest with the senate, greater than it really is." This seems to be the meaning of the sentence just now quoted, and plainly implies that SEXTUS, by PLINY'S assistance, was endeavouring to gain the tribuneship, when it was more matter of favour, than of right. Our author had already pushed ERUCIUS into preferments, and had brought him forward, and made him great, as he was virtuous and learned, above his years. He had procured for him the robe of honour : he had bestowed upon him the questorship ; and, to crown all, he now solicits for him the tribuneship, with indefatigable industry, and by every honest method, that could be devised.

Happy are the people, when the ruling minister is both a wise and an honest man : as it is the rarest, so it is the greatest felicity that can befall a nation : his chief minions and dependants will then be the props and pillars to support and adorn the state ; not the pick-axes and crow-irons to dilapidate and undermine it : And he himself will act according to the rules laid down by HORACE in lines, that cannot be too often repeated :

*Qualem commendes, etiam atque etiam aspice ; ne mox
Incutiant aliena tibi peccata pudorem.*

Fallimur,

*Fallimur, et quondam non dignum tradimus : ergo
Quem sua culpa premet, deceptus omitte tueri ?*

Prudent and cautious whom you recommend,
Look well ; and study long your rising friend :
Lest by your help, when he ascends the height,
And stands expos'd to fame, and public fight,
His faults roll back, like SISYPHUS his stone,
And by the weight oppres'd you sink undone,
Piercing the judgement, nice must be the eye,
Vices and latent passions to descry.
Blind if we are, our blindness let us own ;
Nor strive to screen a villain, when he's known,

* HORAT. Epist. 18. lib. 1.

E P I S T L E X.

PLINY to OCTAVIUS FUFUS.

O Thou unambitious ! thou hard-hearted ! thou
cruel man ! to keep books of so great value
buried so long. How long will you deprive yourself
of praise, and us of pleasure ? Suffer your works to
be perused by mankind ; and let them extend as wide
as the Roman language prevails : for as you have
highly raised our expectations, they ought now nei-
ther to be frustrated or deferred. Some of your
verses are already come to light, and have escaped
from their imprisonment against your will. You may
be sure, like fugitives, they will soon find an owner,
unless you gather them into a volume. Place mor-
tality before your eyes ; reflect, that this is the only
pillar to raise you above it : all other monuments,
frail and subject to decay, no less than men them-
selves, sink into oblivion, and moulder into nothing.
You will say as usual ; “ the friends I leave behind
“ will see justice done to my memory.” From the
bottom of my soul I wish these friends sufficiently
faithful, sufficiently learned and sufficiently laborious,

to be both able and willing to undertake a task, which must require so great care and assiduity. But consider, whether it is not a little rash to expect from others, what you will not undertake for yourself. However, be the publication when it will, at least give us a rehearsal of your works; and that will soon make you give us an edition of them. It will also put you into immediate possession of that kind of joy, which I have so long ago, with sufficient reason, allotted to you in my own mind: for I have represented to myself, what crowds, what applause, what noise, nay even what silence must necessarily attend you: A silence, which, whenever I speak or rehearse in public, delights me more than the loudest clamours of approbation; if it proceed from depth of thought, attention to what is speaking, and desire of hearing still more. Forbear then, by an endless procrastination, to defraud your studies of so plentiful and so ripe a harvest: for it is certainly to be feared, that your delay, when carried to an excess, will be interpreted idleness, sloth, or what is worse, timidity. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

To induce OCTAVIUS to give the public an edition of his works, PLINY, with his usual politeness, entreats his friend to consider, that there is nothing can secure to him immortality, but his poems. *Non cætera fragilia et caduca, non minus quam ipsi homines, occidunt desinuntque*: "Other things, says he, perish like mortal men, and are subject to decay and to oblivion."

We find all the antient authors excessively desirous to transmit their names to posterity, and to enjoy honours as lasting as the world itself. The moderns have likewise the same ambition. But

I.

How swift, alas! the rolling years
Haste to devour their destin'd prey!
A moth each winged minute bears,
Which still in vain the stationers
From the dead authors sweep away;

And

B O O K II.

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And troops of canker worms, with secret pride,
Through gay vermilion leaves and gilded covers glide.

II.

Great BAVINS, should thy critic vein
Each day supply the teeming press,
Of ink shouldst thou whole rivers drain,
Not one octavo shall remain,
To shew thy learning and address:
Oblivion drags them to her silent cell,
Where brave king ARTHUR, and his nobles dwell.

III.

Authors of every size and name,
Knights, squires, and doctors of all colours,
From the pursuit of lasting fame
Retiring, there a mansion claim;
Behold the fate of modern scholars!
Why will you then, with hope delusive led,
For various readings toil, which never will be read?

IV.

With silver clasp, and corner plate,
You fortify the favourite book.
Fear not from worms nor time thy fate:
More cruel foes thy works await;
The butler, with the impatient cook,
And pastry nymphs, with trunk-makers, combine,
To ease the groaning shelves, and spoil the fair design*.

Dices, ut soles, amici mei viderint. Opto equidem tibi tam fideles, tam eruditos, tam laboriosos, ut tantum curæ intentionisque suscipere et possint et velint: "You will say with your usual carelessness, My friends, after I am dead, will take care of my works. It is the warmest wish of my heart, that the friends you leave behind you may have fidelity, learning and zeal, answerable to so pleasing a duty, and so great an undertaking."

* In imitation of HORACE'S Ode to POSTHUMUS. *Eben fugaces, Posthume, Posthume.*

P L I N Y ' s E P I S T L E S .

This is the wish of reason and of friendship: P L I N Y , anxious lest the reputation of OCTAVIUS should be sullied, after his death, by a posthumous edition of his works, urges him to secure his character, during his life-time, and to oblige the world with an immediate publication of his writings; and, as a farther argument, says, “ that OCTAVIUS can scarce expect from others the justice, which is “ in his own power, and which he denies to himself.” If P L I N Y ' s advice to OCTAVIUS was necessary in that age, it is certainly of no less consequence in this, when the names of our greatest authors are sacrificed, and their most imperfect works published, by the avarice and folly of their surviving friends.

E P I S T L E X I .

P L I N Y to A R R I A N U S .

YOU have been usually delighted to hear any thing, which passed in the senate, becoming the dignity of that assembly. For, although you, to enjoy retirement, have withdrawn yourself from hence, yet your concern for the honour of the commonwealth still remains uppermost in your thoughts. Listen then to an act, that passed within these few days. An act, famous by the high character of the person concerned, advantageous by the severity of the example, and memorable to all posterity by the importance of the cause.

MARIUS PRISCUS, who had been proconsul * in *Africa*, upon an accusation exhibited against him by the *Africans*, without making a defence, demanded judges. CORNELIUS TACITUS and I were ordered to appear for the provincials: and we thought, that we

* The proconsuls were governors of a province; and had equal power in their government with the consuls at *Rome*: but at their return they were often called to a strict account, and bills were preferred against them: of which this epistle gives a particular instance.

were

were in duty obliged to acquaint the senate, that the crimes, of which PRISCUS stood accused, were of so enormous and of so cruel a nature, that he could not be allowed the favour he required; he having taken money to condemn, and put to death several innocent persons. FRONTO CATIUS was council for the respondent; and he humbly prayed, that the law against taking bribes, during the execution of an office, might not be stretched too far. CATIUS is a man expert in drawing tears from his audience, and in filling the sails of his speech by the breath of pity. A great debate immediately arose; great clamours issued from all sides; some affirming, that the senate was excluded, by the statute against bribery, from taking cognizance of the crime; others arguing, that the senate was at free liberty to examine into it, and, that as far as he was a transgressor of the laws, so far those laws were to be vindicated. At last JULIUS FEROX, consul elect, a man of great probity and virtue, declared his opinion, that MARIUS should have judges allotted to him; but that nevertheless those people, to whom he was said to have sold innocent blood, should be summoned to appear. After all the different opinions, this last proposition did not only take place, but was the single point, in which the variety of sentiments solely concurred.

It is observable from experience, that though favour and compassion make, at first, very deep and very violent impressions, yet in a little time they give way to judgement and reason, and are in a manner entirely erased; from whence it happens, that when many persons join their resolutions with the common voice of the multitude, scarce any one of them would maintain and stand to those resolutions, were he to speak alone. In the general clamour of an assembly, each man's particular sentiments are drowned and lost in the outcry; but when he is distinguished, and singled out from the crowd, his opinion

opinion must necessarily be made known and appear.

VITELLIUS HONORATUS, and FLAVIUS MARCIANUS attended, according to order. HONORATUS was accused of procuring, by bribery, a Roman knight to be exiled, and seven of his friends to be murdered: for which he gave three hundred thousand sesterces³; MARCIANUS, of giving seven hundred thousand sesterces⁴, to have a greater punishment inflicted upon another Roman knight; who was first beaten with cudgels, then condemned to the mines, and afterwards strangled in prison. Death very opportunely rescued HONORATUS from the justice of the senate. MARCIANUS was brought to trial, at a time when PRISCUS was absent; therefore TUTIUS CEREALIS, a person of consular dignity, insisted, by virtue of his senatorial privilege, that PRISCUS ought to have notice given him of the trial. It is difficult to say, what induced CEREALIS to make this motion. He either thought, that PRISCUS, by being present, would become a greater object of mercy; or he might think the contrary, that he would be a greater object of hatred; or, what I believe is most probable, he imagined, that the justest act, in such a case, where the crime was common, was to make the acquittal, or the punishment so too. The affair was postponed to the next meeting of the senate; a meeting, in which the majesty of the state appeared in all its glory. The emperor, for he was then consul, presided: the month was January; a time of the year remarkable, above any other, for the large concourse of senators at *Rome*. Besides which, the importance of the cause, the expectation and noise raised by the delay of it, and the natural curiosity, which we mortals have, to be apprised and informed of

³ This sum is reduced to English money, page 67.

⁴ [*Septingentis millibus.*] Seven hundred thousand sesterces, are equal to 565 *l.* 60 *s.* 10 *d.*

whatever

whatever is remarkable and extraordinary, drew all people from all parts.

Imagine then what anxiousness, what dread we must have felt, who were to speak in so important an affair, in such an assembly, and in presence of the emperor. I have more than once spoke before the senate, and never met with greater indulgence in any place whatever. But now, as all things appeared new to me, my fears were new also. Besides, as I hinted before, I could not but reflect on the difficulty of the cause. I could not but represent PRISCUS, in my own mind, as a man of consular dignity, as a minister of those sacrifices, which we offer to the gods; and then again fallen and degraded from all honours! It was a heavy task upon me to be forced to accuse a man, who seemed already condemned*: my justice drove me forward against his crimes; my compassion, that kind of compassion, which we feel for persons under sentence, drew me back to shield him from his punishment: however, I recollected my thoughts, and summoned up my spirits.

I began my speech with no less favourable opinion in my audience, than fearful apprehensions in myself. I spoke near five hours; having obtained[†] an hour and a half to be added to the three hours and a half to which I was limited: so that all those difficulties, which appeared terrible to me before I had spoken, vanished in speaking, and became easy. CÆ-

* By the law *de repetundis*, against bribery in magistrates, and public officers.

† *Nam decem clepsydri, quas spatiosissimas acceperam, sunt additæ quatuor.* The clepsydra was a glass, by which the Romans measured their time. It was contrived like the hour glasses, which we use in England, with this difference, that water dropt through the clepsydra, instead of sand. There were several sorts of this engine. *Spatiosissimas acceperam*, seems to signify that PLINY made use of the larger sort; three of which, it is probable, were run out in an hour. If our author had completed his five hours in speaking, he would have consumed fifteen water-glasses.

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SAR indeed shewed so great a regard for me, so great care of me, it would be too much to say he had such an anxiety about me, that he often ordered my freedman, who stood behind me, to put me in mind not to exert my voice and strength too far; being apprehensive, that the vehemence of my argument carried me beyond what the delicacy of my constitution could bear. CLAUDIUS MARCELLINUS, council of the other side, answered me: then the senate was dismissed, and adjourned to the next day; for night coming on, the pleadings could no longer be continued.

SALVIUS LIBERALIS appeared the next day as council for MARIUS; always a subtle reasoner, methodical, sharp, and eloquent. But, in this particular cause he exerted all his skill. CORNELIUS TACITUS answered him most eloquently; and, what is a peculiar excellence in his speeches, with great dignity. FRONTO CATIUS made a very bright reply, in defence of MARIUS, and took up more time, as the case indeed required, in endeavouring to move the compassion of his audience, than in making a defence for his client. Night came on again just as he had finished his oration: so the conclusive proofs were put off to the third day. And here I must observe, what a beautiful face of antient justice appeared, in seeing the senate summoned three days together upon the same cause; and that cause continued those three days, and nothing suffered to interrupt it, but the approach of night.

CORNUTUS TERTULLUS, one of the future consuls, a man of great accomplishments, and most unshaken integrity, was of opinion, that the bribe, amounting to seven hundred thousand sesterces, which MARIUS had taken, should be paid into the public treasury, and that MARIUS should be banished *Rome*, and the dominions of *Italy*: and that the banishment of MARCIANUS should extend still farther, and *Africa* be included in it. At the end of this motion, he added, that

that TACITUS and I having most faithfully and resolutely discharged our duty, the senate ought to decree, that we had performed our parts, in a manner suitable to the dignity of that public service, in which we had been employed.

The consuls elect, and all of consular dignity, assented to the motion made by TERTULLUS, till POMPEIUS COLLEGA made a new proposition; which was, that the seven hundred thousand sesterces should be paid into the treasury, and that MARCIANUS should be banished for five years; but that MARIUS, having paid back the money, according to the law against bribery, ought not to suffer banishment. These two different opinions were patronized by many voices: the majority perhaps were for the latter, as it was the milder, and less oppressive sentence; for some, who seemed to have been of the same sentiments with CORNUTUS, now followed the new proposal. But, when the senate came to a division, those, who stood near the consuls chairs, began to declare themselves in favour of CORNUTUS; and those, who had suffered themselves to be numbered in their places for COLLEGA, now went over to the other side; so that COLLEGA was left with few friends about him. He complained in very bitter terms against the persons, who had engaged him in making this new proposition, and especially against REGULUS, who first advised him to it, and then deserted him in it. But the genius of REGULUS is so fluctuating, that in one minute he is an hero, in the next a coward.

Thus ended this most ample examination, not without leaving behind it a public enquiry of no small consequence. HOSTILIUS FIRMINUS, the harbinger of MARIUS PRISCUS, when the latter was sent into *Africa*, was so interwoven, and entangled in his master's cause, that he has been most heavily and vigorously prosecuted. For both by the account books of MARCIANUS, and by the speech he made before the people
of

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of LEPTIS, he was proved to have acted an under-part in all the wicked administration of PRISCUS, and to have made a bargain with MARCIANUS, whereby his share of the bribe amounted to above fifty thousand denarii⁷. He was likewise proved to have taken a sum of ten thousand sesterces⁸, under the base denomination of a perfumer; a title well becoming so powdered, and so painted a coxcomb. The matter was referred, upon the motion of CORNUTUS, to the next meeting of the senate: and then, it is uncertain whether out of shame or not, HOSTILIUS was absent.

Here, you have a diary of what passes at Rome. In return send me such news as is stirring in the country. Give us an account of your plantations, your vines, your corn, and your choice sheep. Upon the whole, send me a long letter, or never expect another long letter from me. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

There is a natural curiosity in mankind to look into the most minute events of past ages. We are desirous to be fully acquainted with all the transactions and ceremonies of our predecessors, and for that reason are less observing and circumspect about the present times, than we ought to be. We take it for granted, that what are the availing customs now, will remain always the same; and therefore we are as little careful to satisfy the inquisitiveness of posterity, as our ancestors have been to satisfy our own. Their reigning laws and customs were well known to themselves, and they supposed, that those laws and customs must be as familiarly known and understood by their successors. From hence it is, that we remain ignorant at this day of so many circumstances relating to antiquity; though we are perpetually prying into every branch of that kind of knowledge, and re-

⁷ [Quinquaginta millia denarium] Fifty thousand denarii are equal to 1614*l.* 11*s.* 8*d.*

⁸ [Sestertium decem millia] Ten thousand sesterces are equal to 80*l.* 14*s.* 7*d.*

joiced at every step we make in it. This letter therefore must afford great pleasure, as it comprehends a very ample description of the Roman senate, and is also filled with many general remarks and observations applicable to any senate whatever: but there are several obscurities in it, occasioned by the distance of time, and the difference between the Roman laws, and those of our own nation; which will require, and I hope excuse, the length of the following notes.

MARIUS PRISCUS *omissa defensione judices petiit*: "MARIUS PRISCUS quitting any defence from the accusation preferred against him, acknowledging it to be true, demanded judges." This, without an explanation, is extremely dark; it may be thus interpreted: MARIUS PRISCUS knew himself to be guilty: his accusation had been brought before the senate; it was made out very fully against him; and he now petitioned the senate, that they would hear what his council had to offer in his favour, and that they would appoint judges to ascertain what punishment he ought to undergo.

The crimes, of which MARIUS stood accused, were corruption and bribery, attended with the cruel circumstances of banishing, imprisoning, and putting to death innocent persons for money. The Roman laws against bribery were various: in civil cases it was punished by banishment, and by confiscation of estate, and sometimes by confiscation to restore four-fold; so that, as circumstances altered, it might be proper to appoint judges, though the criminal confessed the fact, to consider of a punishment equal to the offence. But bribery was capital, if the bribe was received by a proconsul, or governor, to put an innocent man to death: MARIUS had been guilty of that crime: and therefore PLINY and his colleague TACITUS positively assert, *Excessisse immunitate at servitiâ crimina, quibus dari judices possent*: "That he had exceeded by his inhumanity and cruelty all doubt as to his punishments, in which the laws were fixed and ascertained; and no judges could deviate from those laws." This seems to appear still plainer by the behaviour of his advocate FRONTO CARIUS, who does not attempt to deny any article of the accusation, but in a moving manner tries to soften the punishment.

And what follows confirms this, *Aliis cognitionem senatus lege conclusam, aliis liberam solutaque dicentibus*: "Some were of opinion, that since he was guilty, the law had appointed the punishment of that guilt, and the senate
" was

“ was to acquiesce in that law ; while others insisted, that
 “ the senate was free and uncircumscribed, and therefore
 “ might judge what penalties to inflict upon him.” The
 senate, who at this time had all power, under the emperor,
 lodged in their own body, thought themselves the proper
 court of judicature, to judge and determine every cause
 whatever ; and therefore, they did not comply with what
 had been urged both by PLINY, and by TACITUS, but
 came into the opinion of JULIUS FEROX : *Qui MARIUS*
judicis censuit dandos : “ Who declared that MARIUS might
 “ have judges appointed ; but that the persons, who had
 “ given the bribe, being equally guilty with the proconsul ;
 “ who had received it, ought to be summoned before the
 “ senate.” Accordingly MARIUS, HONORATUS, and
 MARCIANUS were ordered to appear. Their crimes are of
 so black a nature, and so much to the disgrace of the hu-
 man species, that at the same time we entertain the highest
 ideas of the grandeur and majesty of that tribunal, before
 which the criminals were summoned, we must be surprised
 to find the punishments, allotted to such outrageous trans-
 gressions, by no means adequate to the barbarities proved
 and confessed.

A Roman knight was exiled, and seven of his friends were
 put to death, by order of MARIUS. Another Roman knight
 was beat with battoons, was condemned to work in the
 mines, and at last was strangled in prison, by order of the
 same MARIUS ; and both these execrable acts were com-
 mitted, when MARIUS was proconsul in *Africa*. For the
 first murder, he received three hundred thousand sesterces
 from VITELLIUS HONORATUS ; for the second, seven
 hundred thousand sesterces from FLAVIUS MARCIANUS.

HONORATUS died before the day of trial : but MARCI-
 ANUS, who had wickedly bribed MARIUS PRISCUS to issue
 forth his sanguinary commands, was deemed *particeps crimi-*
nis, “ a partner in the crime,” and equally guilty with
 PRISCUS.

From hence PLINY very justly concludes, that their of-
 fences left no room for mercy : and therefore says, with his
 usual good-nature, speaking of MARIUS PRISCUS, *Erat*
ergo perquam onerosum accusare damnatum ; quem ut premebat
atrocitas criminis, ita quasi peractæ damnationis miseratio tue-
batur : “ I was under some uneasiness to accuse a man, who
 “ I knew had already forfeited his life ; and I lamented his
 “ condition,

“ condition, whilst I applauded the justice of his condemnation.”

The senatorial decrees, given against MARIUS and MARCIANUS, run thus : “ That MARIUS should pay into the public treasury the seven hundred thousand sesterces, which he had received as a bribe ; and that he should be interdicted the city of *Rome*, and the confines of *Italy* : The same banishment to be pronounced against MARCIANUS, with an additional interdiction from *Africa*.”

JUVENAL tells us, that even this sentence, gentle as it is, was not put in execution. MARIUS was banished, but his money was banished with him. The lines are these,

Damnatus inani

Judicio ; quid enim salvus infamia nummis ?

Exul ab octava MARIUS bibit, et fruitur Diis

Iratis : at tu victris provincia pleras^a.

MARIUS, who pill'd his province, escapes the laws,
And keeps his money, tho' he lost his cause :
His sine, begg'd off, contemns his infamy,
Can rise at twelve, and get him drunk e'er three :
Enjoys his exile, and, condemn'd in vain,
Leaves thee, prevailing province ! to complain^b.

It is to be wished, that PLINY had mentioned the arguments of the lawyers, as well as their names, in this extraordinary cause. We might then have guessed the reasons, that induced the senate to allot such mild punishments to such enormous villainies. Could the *patres conscripti* forget, that MARIUS was guilty of homicide ? Of homicide under the form of justice ? Could they forget, that MARCIANUS hired him to commit the murder ? Could they be ignorant of the laws made for the punishment of such malefactors ? Certainly they could not. Whence then did this indulgence arise ? It must have prevailed either from a wicked favour for the criminals, or a proud opinion of their own power to leap over all bounds of equity and law.

After what has been already observed upon this epistle, it is impossible to agree with our author, that the trial of MA-

^a JUVENAL. Satir. 1. 7. 47.

^b DRYDEN.

MARIUS PRISCUS was, *severitate exempli salubre*, "advantageous by the severity of the example."

EPISTLE XII.

PLINY to ARRIANUS.

WE have finished the public enquiry subsequent to the trial of MARIUS PRISCUS, which I mentioned to you in my last. The perfumer FIRMANUS is shaved, whether close enough or not, I cannot tell. He was brought before the senate, and defended himself in the manner of a person already found guilty. The opinions of the consuls elect were divided. CORNUTUS TERTULLUS moved to degrade him from the rank of senator: ACUTIUS NERVA moved to have him only rendered incapable of governing any province. This, as the softer judgement, prevailed; but in reality was the heavier and severer sentence: for what can be more miserable, than to be cut off from all honours arising from the senate, yet not exempted from the labours and difficulties consequential to an attendance there? What can be more unhappy, than to receive so public an ignominy, and not be suffered to withdraw from the sight of mankind: but on the contrary, to be placed in the most conspicuous point of light, only to be stared and pointed at by the people? Or what can appear in the view of the world less consistent, or less honourable, than to sit as a senator, yet branded and marked by the senate? To have a power of condemning, equal with those, by whom a man has been condemned? To be incapacitated from acting as proconsul, merely from having been infamous as lieutenant of a province; and yet to have a seat among the judges of proconsuls? To be found guilty of bribery, and yet capable of condemning, or absolving others of that crime? However, this resolution

lution found favour with the majority: for votes are numbered, not weighed. Such must be the proceedings in public counsels: though nothing sure can be more unequal, than the equality of power; giving the same right of judging to a set of people, whose faculties are so extremely different and unlike.

I have fulfilled my promise, and have acquitted myself of the engagement entered into in my first letter; which, by computing the time when I wrote it, I suppose you have received; especially, as I sent it by a very speedy and a very trusty messenger, unless he met with some accidental stop in his way. It is your part now to requite me with an answer, first to that letter, and then to this; and let your answers be as copious as possible. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

This twelfth epistle gives an account of the judgement passed upon *HOSTILIUS FIRMINUS*. During the course of the trial mentioned in the last epistle, it appeared from some of the arguments used in favour of *MARCIANUS*, that *FIRMINUS* had been equally guilty of bribery with his master *MARIUS PRISCUS*. He had assisted *PRISCUS*, during his proconsulship in *Africa*, as an under agent in all acts of baseness and cruelty. He had bargained with *MARCIANUS* for fifty thousand denarii, to indulge him in his insatiate revenge upon a Roman knight, whose name is not given to us in this letter. He had also received ten thousand sesterces, it does not appear for what villainy, under the denomination of perfumer to the proconsul; a title, says our author, agreeable to the character of so compleat a coxcomb.

The particulars of the trial are passed over; but it is plain, that *HOSTILIUS FIRMINUS* was found guilty; because the whole debate turned upon what punishments he ought to suffer. It is probable his defence was not a denial of the facts, but an excuse for doing them. He alledged, that he was only servant to *MARIUS*, and acted under his orders, and in obedience to his commands. But it is impossible to guess, by what motives the senate pretended to be induced, in their decree against *FIRMINUS*. Why was he not con-

demned to refund the ten thousand sesterces he had received? Why was he not banished, and sent to keep company with his wicked master? By what precedent was so slight a punishment inflicted upon him? Or why was a man, manifestly convicted of corruption, still allowed to sit as a judge? The only answer to be given to these questions is, that the Roman people, and the senate in particular, were at this time so abandoned in their morals, and so lost to all sense of honour, religion, and justice, that they acted on no other principles, than the dictates of bribery and vice.

EPISTLE XIII.

PLINY to PRISCUS.

YOU are industriously taking every occasion to oblige me: and I receive obligations with more pleasure from you, than from any man in the world. These two reasons have determined me to solicit you in an affair, which I have most earnestly at heart.

You have the command of a great army, and have thereby frequent opportunities of conferring benefits: besides, you have now had it long in your power to bestow favours upon all your own friends. Turn then a little of that power towards mine; they are not many: your generosity might wish them numerous; but my modesty suffers me to name but one or two; nay, I should rather say but one: he is **VOCONIUS ROMANUS**. His father was one of the most eminent men in the equestrian order: his father-in-law, I may call him indeed his second father, since **VOCONIUS** has succeeded to his name, as well as his virtues, was still more eminent: His mother a lady of the first distinction in the higher *Spain*^c. The people in that province, you know, are remarkable for their understanding and discretion. He himself has been lately high-priest of **JUPITER**. But, from

^c *Hispania Tarraconensis*, containing now *Galicia, Navarre, Castile, and Arragon*.

the time we were first students together, I have loved him most nearly and familiarly. The same chamber held us in town, and in the country; and to him I dedicated both my serious and my mirthful hours: for a more faithful friend, or a more chearful companion is no where to be found. There is a wonderful sweetness in his conversation, and the same sweetness displays itself in his countenance and address. His genius is lofty, quick, elegant, easy, and particularly bright in pleading causes. His familiar letters seem dictated by the Muses. His extraordinary affection for me is equal to my affection for him. When we were young men, I was very desirous to do him service; and I have lately obtained for him, from our most gracious emperor, the *jus trium liberorum*. A grant, which though the emperor has always bestowed very sparingly, and with great caution, yet he has indulged me in it, in such a manner, as made the choice seem his own. How therefore can I better justify the benefits I have already procured for my friend, than by adding to them? especially as he, for whom they are obtained, receives them with gratitude sufficient to merit any addition.

I have now given you the character of Voconius, and I have told you how much I love and admire him. Let me entreat you therefore, to employ your whole thoughts, as well as your whole power, to promote him. But above all things, honour him with your love: for though you may go as far as possibly you can in heaping preferments upon him, you will never be able to give him any of greater value than your friendship: and that you may be assured he is a man proper to be admitted into your intimacy, I have here run through his studies, his morals, and his whole life. I would add to my entreaties in his favour, if I did not believe an importunate request was disagreeable to you, although at the same time I must own, I have importuned you in this

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epistle. However, he asks a favour with the best grace, who gives a good reason for what he asks. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

PLINY has left nothing to be added to the character of VOCONIUS ROMANUS. He has described him as a man,

In arts and manners eminently grac'd,
The strictest morals, and the finest taste †.

- * He was the bosom friend and hourly companion of our author, who “the friends he had, and their adoption tried, grappled them to his soul with hooks of steel.”

But to take notice of some particulars in this epistle. *Flamen proximo fuit.* AULUS GELLIUS, and several other authors, give us a very exact account of the Flamen Dialis, or high priest of JUPITER, of the various ceremonies at his consecration, of the rights he enjoyed, and of the particular restrictions, to which he was obliged to submit. Some of these last were idly superstitious. He was neither to name, nor touch raw meat, a she goat, or beans: he was not to be shaved, nor to have his hair cut, except by a freedman, and then only with brazen scissors: and the paring of his nails were to be buried under a tree. The Flamen Dialis was a sacred post of great dignity and honour; bestowed always upon patricians, whose characters, and families, were eminent. JULIUS CÆSAR had enjoyed it at the age of seventeen. The Flamen Dialis was obliged to quit his priesthood at the death of his wife. *Uxorem si amisit, flaminio decedit.* ROMANUS died in the reign of the emperor ADRIAN, and this epistle was written in the reign of TRAJAN, to whom PLINY confirms, in the tenth † book of his epistles, what he says here of VOCONIUS.

Ab optimo principe trium liberorum ei jus impetravi. It seems, by this expression, as if PLINY had obtained for ROMANUS the privileges, which were granted by the Papian law to such Romans, who had three children. Vo-

* DOCTOR YOUNG,
Book 10. Epistle 3.

† SHAKESPEARE.

‡ Vide

CONIUS had not that number, but the emperor, in whom all power was centered and confirmed, could allow those rights and benefits to whomsoever he thought fit: and we shall find, though he was very tenacious of public honours, he scarce ever denied PLINY any request. *Trium liberorum jus inter præmia fuit, quæ, lege Pappiâ, maritis patribusque decreta fuerunt, cujus hæc erat vis, ut in petitione magistratus præferrentur candidati, quibus plures liberi essent; itæ: ut in ipso magistratu præcederent tales; denique ut ante 25. annum ætatis contra legem annariam possunt admitti. Quæ beneficia non nisi in illis locum habebant, quibus terni liberi nati essent: quibus pauciores, excidebant:* “The advantages for having three children were amongst the rewards, which, by the Pappian law, were decreed to husbands, and fathers; the benefit of which was, that the preference should be given to those, who had most children, when they appeared as candidates for the magistracy: and that when they were made magistrates, they should take place: and lastly, that before the twenty fifth year of their age, they might be admitted to that honour, notwithstanding the *lex annaria*. These benefits were only conferred upon those, who had three children; nor were those, who had less, entitled to such dignities.”

The subject of this epistle recalls to us the address from HORACE to TIBERIUS CÆSAR, beginning,

SEPTIMIUS, CLAUDI, nimirum intelligit unus
Quanti me facias †.

“SEPTIMIUS only knows, how great a part
I share in your affections, and your heart.

† ROSINUS gives us the following account of the Pappian law. *De jure patronatus extat lex Pappia, quam tulit M. PAPPIUS MUTILUS cos. cum Q. POPPEO AUGUSTI temporibus. Ut ex bonis ejus, qui H. S. * centum millium patrimonium reliquerat, et pauciores quam tres liberos habebat, sive in testamento factis, sive intestatus mortuus erat, virilis pars patrono deberetur. Itaque cum unum quidem filium hæredem reliquerat libertus, perinde pars media debebatur patrono, ac si is sine ullo filio, filiave intestatus decessisset: cum vero duos duasve hæredes reliquerat, tertia pars debebatur patrono, si tres reliquerat, repellabatur patronus. Item, ut libertus, qui duos liberos in potestate haberet, operarum obligatione liberaretur.*

‡ HORACE, Ep. 9. Book 1.

† Sect. rtiùm.

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The one is in prose, what the other is in verse, a gentle, but warm recommendation of a beloved friend.

PLINY constantly concludes his epistles with some elegant turn, or some agreeable observation, which rests upon the mind, and at the same time sets off whatever went before it. His letters carry with them the poignancy of an epigram, and, like obelisks, stand upon a solid basis, and rise in due proportion, till they end in a point at last. The latter part of this particular epistle is extremely delicate and unaffected, and the beginning of it perfectly polite and engaging; so that the whole may be esteemed, as a model in this kind of writing, and a pattern in what manner to make a request, and to pursue a recommendation.

EPISTLE XIV.

PLINY to MAXIMUS.

YOU judge very rightly: my whole time is taken up in pleading causes before the *centumviri*; causes, which rather keep me employed, than pleased: many of them are trifling, and many belong to low obscure people. It seldom happens, that any process is remarkable, either by the dignity of the persons concerned, or the importance of the business. Besides, few lawyers, with whom one would wish to be associated, appear in these courts: and really the rest are a parcel of bold, and for the most part unknown young men, who come thither to declaim, but with such indecency, and such a want of experience, that our countryman ATTILIUS seems to have described them exactly, where he says, "Young lawyers begin in the forum with causes before the *centumviri*, as young scholars begin in the schools with reading HOMER:" for in both those places, what is most difficult, is begun first.

I cannot say, it is within my memory, but I have been told by people older than myself, that no young men, even of the first quality, were allowed a place
in

in the forum; unless they were introduced by one of consular dignity. In such veneration was then held this most excellent institution. At present all boundaries of modesty and reverence are broken down; and all places lie open to all people: men are not introduced, but they break in; and the audiences, upon these occasions, are exactly suited to the orators. They are mercenary wretches, hired for the purpose; they meet in the courts of justice, where they are treated at the expence of their patrons, as publicly, as if a court of justice was a dining room: and thus bribed they go from court to court. And therefore they are called by the Greeks, not improperly, *Σοφοκλήεις*, or, to translate it into latin, *Laudicæni*¹, applauders for a supper. And yet the infamy, expressed by the name in both languages, encreases every day. No longer ago than yesterday, two of my servants, young men about the age of seventeen, were enticed to act the part of applauders, for the sake of a bribe amounting to about three *denarii*². You see exactly how much it costs to be reputed eloquent. You see the price, which is sufficient to fill the benches of the forum, and to procure a croud-ed audience; the price to purchase the loudest peals of applause, whensoever a certain sign is given by the person placed in the middle for that purpose. A sign, you know, is absolutely necessary for people, who neither understand, nor hear what is doing; for there are many at too great a distance to hear one word, and those are always loudest in applause. If when you are passing through the courts of judicature, you are desirous to know how any particular person has performed, you need neither go upon the bench, nor listen to what he says: you may easily

¹ Persons who are hired for a supper to praise those, who entertain them; vulgarly called in English, trencher-friends.

² [*Terni denarii.*] Three denarii are equal in English money to 1 s. 11 d. $\frac{1}{4}$. a denarius being 7 d. $\frac{1}{4}$.

guests without much trouble ; for be assured, that he, who is most applauded, speaks worst. LARGIUS LICINIUS first introduced this custom, merely that he might get an audience ; and I remember to have heard my preceptor QUINTILIAN tell a story of him almost in these words : “ I attended DOMITIUS AFER, when
 “ he pleaded before the *centumviri* : his manner was
 “ always solemn and deliberate. On a sudden he
 “ heard a most strange and outrageous noise in the
 “ adjoining court ; and being surpris'd, he left off
 “ speaking : when the noise was over, he resumed
 “ the thread of his discourse. The noise beginning
 “ again, he held his peace a second time, and for a
 “ third. At last he asked, who was declaiming there,
 “ to occasion all this clamour ? He was answered,
 “ LICINIUS. Whereupon, quitting the subject of
 “ his discourse, he address'd himself to the court,
 “ and said, Centumvirs ! the art of eloquence is now
 “ at an end.” AFER was in the wrong ; it begun to decline, but it did not entirely perish then : the utter demolition of that art was reserv'd for these times. I am really ashamed to tell you what effeminate orations we hear, and what soft tinkling of applauses attend them. The clapping of hands, or rather the cymbals, and the timbrels, are the only music wanting to these sing-song chorusses : but the howlings, for a softer word cannot express these sort of applauses, indecent even in the theatres, abound in great plenty. Nevertheless the service of my friends, and my own age, retain and stop me here yet a while : and, I am afraid, if I should go off too abruptly, it would seem as if I ran away from the fatigues, not from the indecorum of the place : however, I appear seldomer than usual, and so begin to withdraw myself by degrees. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

Impudence in all shapes, and at all ages, is disagreeable, and shocking. In young people, it discovers an excess of vanity; in old, a great want of understanding. Diffidence and modesty are the offsprings of sense and experience; and where they are not innate, they ought to be acquired, as the most advantageous lesson, that can be learnt, and the best mask, that can be worn, to hide deformity. The character of **PLINY** is the very contrast of forwardness and conceit; and we see him in this epistle, under the utmost uneasiness at being obliged to appear in a court, where noise and folly, joined and enforced by youth and inexperience, had destroyed all decency, and overturned all order. He paints this scene in a very ample manner; he describes a parcel of pert young coxcombs, who not only break in upon the dignity of the place, and the authority of the judges, but hire a mercenary rabble, sometimes for meat; and sometimes for money, to applaud their vanity, and to thunderclap their nonsense. Popular applauses are as soon lost as purchased: but so fond are we, especially in our early days, of fame, that we will buy it at any rate, and when we cannot reach the substance, will be humbly content with the shadow; not considering, that the silent nod, and calm approbation of one man of sense, is worth the loudest clamours, and most outrageous praises of all the *Σοφονδαι*, or *Laudiceni* in the world. The most finished original of these soothing miscreants may be seen in the character of **GNATHO**, as it is drawn by **TERENCE** in his *Eunuchus*. **TERENCE** is an author, who had so perfect a knowledge of mankind, that at this day his rules of flattery are followed by instinct in all the polite courts of *Europe*; and ministers and lords are **GNATHOS**, without ever having heard of the name.

Sumus tamen solito rariore, quod initium est gradatim desinendi: “ But we are not so often seen there as usual, which is the first step towards gradually leaving the place.” **PLINY**, who held the parasites and all their practices in the utmost disdain, was grown tired and uneasy at pleading before the *centumviri*: their court was now no longer a seat of justice, but a den of knaves and fools; a sanctuary for flatterers and their patrons; and therefore, our author resolves to withdraw himself from amongst them

as

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as soon as possible, but in so prudent a manner, as not to give the least room for reproach.

EPISTLE XV.

PLINY to VALERIANUS.

TELL us, how does your *Marſian* eſtate pleaſe you, which you bought long ago? How do you like your new purchaſe? Are all theſe lands as fair in your eye, ſince they became your property, as they were before? For, to ſay truth, it ſeldom happens, that what is already poſſeſſed, proves ſo agreeable, as when it was only in wiſh and proſpect.

My mother's eſtate does not at all ſuit me in its ſituation: but it pleaſes me, becauſe it was hers. And now time and patience have accuſtomed, and hardened me to bear all the inconveniencies ariſing from it; for, by having had conſtant complaints to make, I am grown abſolutely aſhamed of complaining. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

We ſee farther into the characters of men, from their familiar letters, than from any other part of their writings. Expreſſions flow, *currente calamo*, that riſe immediately and undisguiſed from the heart. A knave will be ſooner diſcovered by his correſpondence, than by his converſation: in ſpite of himſelf he will appear there in his proper colours: as on the other hand, a man of virtue, like PLINY, will diſplay a thouſand beauties in his epiſtles, which ruſh from him unpremeditated and without deſign. It is therefore from triſling unguarded expreſſions, that we may form our juſteſt ideas of epiſtolary authors; and PLINY in this letter, after having agreeably rallied the eagernels of mankind in deſiring what they have not, and in being tired with what they have, ſhews his filial piety in an inſtance, that muſt not paſs unnoticed. *Me prædia materna parum ænimodò tractant: delectant tamen ut materna*; “ The lands, “ which

“ which were my mother’s, are not situated in the place I
 “ could wish; nay, they are inconvenient: but as they once
 “ belonged to her, I am resolved not to exchange them
 “ even for a more eligible situation.”

When we discover, as in this case, instances of a dutiful and lasting respect to parents, they cannot fail to meet with our approbation. The gratitude we owe to those, who, by the will of God, are made the authors of our being, can only end with our lives. It ceases not with theirs: the duty we pay to their name when dead, ought to be the same, as to their inclinations and commands when living. Their memory ought to be ever honoured, ever sacred, and ever glorious in our eye; and what was dear to them, should be esteemed and beloved by us.

Among the many criticisms, written upon HOMER and VIRGIL, and the many parallels, drawn betwixt the heroes of each poet, we find the piety of ÆNEAS often censured, as too languid for the principal feature in the picture of that prince. I apprehend this remark to have been built on no very just foundation: for if virtue can inspire fortitude, as the certainly does, filial piety is the first and greatest of all virtues, and it is from thence the noble qualities of ÆNEAS take their origin. It is from thence his tenderness to his son, his affection to his friends, and his compassion to his enemies arise. The two chiefs, ÆNEAS and ACHILLES, are both magnanimous, but in a different manner: the one conquers with the heat of rage, and the thirst of war; the other overcomes with the calmness of justice, and the resolution of a soul at peace within itself. We may possibly tremble at the son of PELEUS; but we shall certainly love the son of ANCHISES; or, to consider the Iliad and the Æneid together, we shall find, that HOMER animates the spirits, and fires the head; but we shall feel, that VIRGIL melts the heart, and captivates the affections: nor do equal emotions of softness and humanity fluctuate in our bosoms, while we read the Grecian, as while we read the Roman poet; unless at the parting of ANDROMACHE and her husband, or where ACHILLES gives back to PRIAM the body of HECTOR: and in this last instance we must observe, that ACHILLES is melted into compassion, and loses the inexorable disposition of his nature, at the mention of his father’s name.

* Homer. Iliad. 24. v. 486. See Mr. POPE’s translation of this passage, and his notes upon it.

HOMER and VIRGIL are a sufficient excuse for being led out of the way farther, than was at first intended: but to return to PLINY, the reader will remember, that in the fourth epistle of this book, our author tells CALPURNIA, his revenue is extenuated by the untoward situation of his estate. ¹ *Reditus propter conditionem agrorum nescio minor an incertior*: "My rents at best are but small, and the payment
 " of them so uncertain, by the sterility of the land, situated
 " in a very unfruitful country, that the little I ought to receive is still made less." These were his lands in the *Larion* territories, where the soil was extremely barren: but in pious regard to the memory of his mother, he rather chuses an uncertain income, than to part with an estate, which had belonged to his ancestors.

¹ See Book 2. Epistle 4.

EPISTLE XVI.

PLINY to ANNIANUS.

WITH your usual attention to my affairs, you admonish me not to look upon the codicils of ACILIANUS, who has appointed me his heir *ex parte*, as legal; because they are not confirmed by the will itself. This is a point of law, with which I am very well acquainted: and it is known even by those, who know little else. But I have always laid it down as a rule to myself, never to disobey the will of the dead; but to act under every will, though it should be defective in point of form, as if it had been perfected and valid. However, the codicils were all written by ACILIANUS's own hand; and though they are not confirmed by the will itself, they ought to be looked upon by me, in the same light as if they needed no such authority; especially, as there is no room for an information to be lodged against me. If indeed there was any danger, that what I gave away, would be forfeited to the public, I ought to act with less haste, and with more caution: but,

but, when it is entirely in the power of an heir to dispose of whatever falls to him by inheritance, I am under no necessity to break through my own private rule, since it is not repugnant to any public institution. Farewell.

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The Roman laws required, that a testator should mention the power, reserved to him by law, of making a codicil to his last will in the will itself; otherwise the codicil could be of no validity. It appears by this letter that ACILIANUS had forgotten in his will, to make that reservation, although he had written the codicils with his own hand: but PLINY, with the utmost justice and generosity, despises forms, where he can safely fulfil the intentions of the dead. A paraphrase upon the whole letter may set this act of disinterested friendship in the best point of view.

“ It is extremely kind in you, says our author, to put me in mind of that part of our law, which renders the codicil to ACILIANUS’s will invalid, and of no effect. I allow your observation to be very just, nay every stripling at the bar knows it to be so. The laws of the public, I confess, are against me; but the laws of uprightness, justice, and gratitude, laws superior to all others, and deeply imprinted in my own breast, will defend and support me before God and man. The will of the dead, according to my way of thinking, ought to be obeyed, and their desires literally fulfilled: therefore no defect in legal forms, no flaw or imperfection in a last will, shall ever hinder me from acting as I ought: my soul, I thank heaven, soars above such trifling ceremonies; and when once I know the design of a deceased friend, it shall infallibly be executed by me, to the utmost of my power. Besides, are not the codicils written with ACILIANUS’s own hand? Can I doubt then of his intentions? Certainly I cannot: And since he has pointed out to me the path I am to tread in, I am resolved to walk straight to the point he had in view, without turning on one side, or on the other.

“ As the wisdom and goodness of our emperor^m has banished those foes to mankind, those pests of human so-

^m TRAJAN.

“ ciety,

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"ciety, the informers ^a, I am not apprehensive of having
 "an information lodged against me for acting contrary to
 "law; and as I am left a joint heir, I can divide my share
 "of the fortune among the more immediate relations of
 "ACILIANUS. I dare say, he named me for this purpose:
 "he was well assured, that I should keep up to the full
 "meaning of his intentions, and should prove a father to
 "his family, after he himself was reduced to ashes, and
 "mingled with the worms. His hopes of me shall not be un-
 "accomplished. I will be heir to his virtues, but not to his
 "estate. Indeed were I nominated his sole heir, I ought
 "to be very tenacious of whatever was bequeathed to me,
 "because in that case, should I give up my hereditary right,
 "the fortune of my friend, for want of heirs, would de-
 "volve to the public: but here let me act how I will, the
 "people can have no pretence to put in their claim: ACI-
 "LIANUS has many heirs besides me; and as the private
 "law, which I have established in my own bosom, is not
 "repugnant to any public law in being, I may certainly in-
 "dulge the dictates of my conscience, and proceed, as be-
 "comes a man, who thinks himself accountable for all his
 "actions, on this side of the grave."

^a See PLINY'S panegyric, chap. 34.

EPISTLE XVII.

PLINY to GALLUS.

YOU wonder, why I am so infinitely fond of
 my LAURENTINUM, or, if you had rather call
 it so, my LAURENS. I dare say, your wonder will
 cease, when I make you acquainted with the beauties
 of the villa, the situation of the place, and the large
 extent of the shore, upon which it stands.

The distance is seventeen miles from *Rome* ^o: a dis-
 tance, which allows us, after we have finished the

^o The Roman miles were distinguished by stones put up at the
 end of each mile, marked with figures according to their distance
 from *Rome*.

business

business of the day, to return thither from town, with the setting sun. We are not confined to one road; for both the Laurentine, and the Ostian way will bring us home. If you go the Laurentine, you must quit the high road at the fourteenth stone: if the Ostian, at the eleventh. Each of these roads is sandy, and therefore a little tedious and heavy in a wheel carriage, but on horseback extremely short and pleasant. The prospects on every side are finely diversified; sometimes your view is limited by woods; then again is opened and extended by spacious meadows. Here, you see flocks of sheep; there, studs of horses and herds of cattle; all driven down from the mountains by the inclemency of the winter, and growing fat and sleek by the pasturage, and the warmth of the spring.

The house itself is made for use, not for parade. In the front you enter a court-yard, plain and void of ornament, but handsome. This leads to a little neat court in the shape of the letter O, surrounded by galleries, an absolute shelter against all storms; being well defended, both by the transparent windows of the house, and by the projecting roof above. Overagainst the middle portico is a large cheerful court, leading to a very handsome dining room, which projects towards the sea-shore; and the walls of it are gently washed by the waves of the sea, whenever the south-westerly wind drives them in upon the land. Every side of the room has either folding doors, or windows, as large as doors; so that from the sides and from the front you have the prospect, as it were, of three different oceans. Behind is a quadrangle, a portico, and a lesser court; then again a portico, and then a vestibule, beyond which woods are seen, and at a greater distance mountains. On the left hand of the dining room, a little farther from the shore, is a very large parlour^p: within

^p *Cubiculum*, though in the general acceptation of the word signifying a bed-chamber, is often made use of as a name common to other rooms, and with that liberty is here translated.

that a smaller withdrawing room, which has one window looking to the east, another to the west. From the western window you have a prospect of the sea, more distant indeed, but more agreeable. There is an angle formed between the dining room and parlour, that collects the rays, and augments the heat of the warmest sun. Here I have my winter apartments: and here is the place of exercise for my servants. Not a breath of wind is stirring here, except now and then a blast, which brings a cloud upon us; but it clears up again, before the warmth is gone off from the place. Joining to this angle is a room in an elliptic form: a shape, that allows us from the several windows to enjoy the benefit of the sun during the whole course of the day; and the walls of it are so contrived, as to hold books, and be a kind of library for such volumes; as are rather designed for amusement than study. Next this, a passage only intervening, is a bed-chamber: the passage is raised and boarded in such a manner, that the heat it receives is most equally dispensed and distributed throughout every part of it. The remaining part of this side of the house is destined for servants and freedmen: but some of the apartments are so neatly fitted up, that they may be filled upon occasion by guests of a much higher rank. On the other side is a most elegant bed-chamber, and next to that, what you may either call a large bed-chamber, or a moderate eating room, enlivened both by the sun, and by the sea. After this, you enter into another bed-chamber with a lobby before it. The height makes it cool in summer; the thick walls make it warm in winter; for it is absolutely withdrawn from the inclemencies of every wind. There is another bed-chamber and lobby joined to it by a partition-wall. Then you come to the baths.

The cold bath is very wide and spacious. On the opposite walls are fixed two bathing cisterns, that jet out

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out into the room, and are made large enough to swim in. Contiguous to which are the chambers for the use of the bath, particularly the room where the different oils are kept, another for the stoves, another for the furnace; then two little baths, which are rather neat than sumptuous: and to these is joined, by an exquisite piece of workmanship, the hot bath; where, as you swim, you have a full prospect of the sea.

At no great distance is the tennis-court, so situated, as never to be annoyed by the heat, and to be visited only by the setting sun. At the end of the tennis-court rises a tower, containing two rooms at the top of it, and two again under them; besides a banquetting room, from whence there is a view of a very wide ocean, a very extensive continent, and numberless beautiful villas interspersed upon the shore. Answerable to this is another turret, containing on the top one single room, where we enjoy both the rising and the setting sun. Underneath is a very large store room for fruit, and a granary, and under these again a dining room, from whence, even when the sea is most tempestuous, we only hear the roaring of it, and that but languidly, and at a distance. It looks upon the garden, and the place for exercise; which includes my garden. The whole is encompassed with box; and where that is wanting, with rosemary: for box, when sheltered by buildings, will flourish very well, but withers immediately if exposed to wind and weather; or ever so distantly affected by the moist dews from the sea. This place for exercise surrounds a delicate shady vineyard, the paths of which are easy and soft, even to the naked feet.

The garden is filled with mulberry and fig trees; the soil being propitious to both those kinds of trees,

* *Gestatio*. This is scarce to be translated into English, by any one word. It is mentioned by PLINY in other epistles, and always signifies, a place of exercise.

but scarce to any other. A dining room, too remote to view the ocean, commands an object no less agreeable, the prospect of the garden : and at the back of the dining room are two apartments, whose windows look upon the vestibule of the house ; and upon a fruitery, and kitchen garden. From hence you enter into a covered gallery, large enough to appear a public walk. The gallery has a double row of windows on both sides ; in the lower row are several, which look towards the sea ; and one on each side towards the garden ; in the upper row there are fewer : in calm days, when there is not a breath of air stirring, we open all the windows : but in windy weather, we take the advantage of opening that side only, which is entirely free from the hurricane. Before the gallery lies a terrace perfumed with violets. The building not only retains the heat of the sun, and increases it by reflexion, but defends and protects us from the northern blasts ; and as the front is always warm, the back part, in like manner, is equally cool. It is so contrived, that we are entirely sheltered from the violent heats of the south-west ; and indeed let the wind blow from what corner it will, the influence and power of it are broken and destroyed by the position of the gallery : and therefore we find it a very pleasant room in winter, and much more so in summer : for then the shadow of the building is thrown upon the terrace in the forenoon ; and in the afternoon we can walk under the shade of it in the place of exercise, or in that part of the garden next to it : the shade lengthening and decreasing according to the length or decrease of the day. But the gallery itself is never cooler, than when the sun shines perpendicularly upon the roof of it. Add to this, that by opening the windows we have a thorough draught of the west wind, which prevents all bad effects arising from the stagnation of unwholesome air.

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At the end of the terrace, adjoining to the gallery, is a little garden-apartment, which I own is my delight. In truth it is my mistress: I built it; and in it is a particular kind of hot-house, which looks on one side towards the terrace, on the other towards the sea; but on both sides has the advantage of the sun. A double door opens into another room, and one of the windows has a full view of the gallery. On the side next the sea, overagainst the middle wall, is an elegant little closet; separated only by transparent windows, and a curtain, which can be opened or shut at pleasure, from the room just mentioned. It holds a bed and two chairs; the feet of the bed stands towards the sea, the back towards the house, and one side of it towards some distant woods. So many different views, seen from so many different windows, diversify, and yet blend the prospect. Adjoining to this cabinet is my own constant bed-chamber: where I am never disturbed by the discourse of my servants, the murmurs of the sea, nor the violence of a storm. Neither lightning, nor day-light breaks in upon me, till my windows are opened. The reason of so perfect and undisturbed a calm here arises from a large void space, which is left between the walls of the bed-chamber and of the garden; so that all sound is drowned in the intervening vacancy. Close to the bed-chamber is a little stove, placed so near a small window of communication, that it lets out or retains the heat just as we think fit.

² *Heliocaminus* is properly a *solarium*, which, in old English, is called a *sollar*, a place raised and exposed to the sun. Monsieur *Falibien* translates the *heliocaminus*, *Un salon fort echauffé par l'ardeur du soleil*. Scarce any word in our language answers it sufficiently. The derivation comes from *ἥλιος*, the sun, and *καμίνος*, a furnace.

³ The transparent windows and curtain, spoken of in this place, were answerable to our glass doors between rooms: so that when they were thrown open, the closet was joined to the other room, and the bed stood, as it were, in an alcove.

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From hence we pass through a lobby into another room, which stands in such a position as to receive the sun, though obliquely, from day-break till past noon. When I shut myself up in this apartment, I seem to be enclosed at a great distance from my own house. The chief delight I take here is during the feasts of Saturn, at a time when all the rest of the house is filled with the clamours of the festival; for then I never interrupt the diversions of my domestics, nor do they break in upon my studies.

But amidst all these conveniencies, and all this pleasure, we want running water. However, we have wells, or rather springs at command: for such is the wonderful nature of the ground, that in any part of the shore, take off the surface of the earth where you will, water immediately bubbles up, and presents itself: and it is so perfectly pure, as not to have the least briny taste, though so near the sea. The neighbouring woods yield us great plenty of fuel, and Ostia furnishes every kind of provision. A frugal man can be very well contented with what a small village affords; especially when it is so near, as to be separated from us only by one house. There are three inns in this little town, in each of which there is a bath; a very great conveniency, in case my bath at home is not ready heated and prepared; which may happen either by my too sudden arrival, or my too short stay. A great many little houses, here and there joined in clusters, or separately scattered along the coast, seem to entertain us with a prospect of several cities. If you go upon the water, or if you walk upon the shore, the landskip is the same: the strand itself is sometimes softened by a long calm, but much oftener hardened by the tumult and conflict of the waves. I must own, that our ocean does not abound with the choicest kind of fish: however, it produces excellent soles and prawns. But as to inland plenty, my house is never without it, especially milk;
for

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for the cattle are continually coming from their pastures to seek water and shade near this place.

Now tell me, do I appear to act reasonably in fixing my habitation, and taking infinite delight in such a retreat? If you are not too much wedded to the city, you will be impatient to retire hither also. I wish you may; that amidst so many pleasing circumstances, which attend my villa, it may still boast of a superior recommendation in the happiness of your company. Adieu.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

The house, which PLINY here describes, assumed its name from *Laurentum*, a village, of which, at this day, there are scarce any remains, except an inn called *San-Lorenzo*, where it is supposed part of that village stood. At a small distance from *San-Lorenzo* is a place called *Petrus*; where some authors fix the *Laurentina* of SECUNDUS. A map, in the edition of PLINY by CELLARIUS, shows us the exact spot, where our author's villa was built, not far from *Ofia*, close upon the shore of the *Tuscan* sea, in the territories of *Latium*, and near the mouth of the *Tyber*: but whatever delights the place afforded PLINY, the neighbourhood of *Ofia* is at present entirely deserted, on account of the badness of the climate, and the noxious qualities of the air.

Laurentinum was purchased by PLINY, as an immediate retreat after the fatiguing employments of the day. The distance from *Rome* answered this purpose. *Decem et septem millibus passuum ab urbe secessit*: "Our distance is seventeen miles from *Rome*." The prospects from the road were various and agreeable: PLINY speaks of them with great pleasure in the beginning of this epistle, *Varia hinc atque inaequalis facies*: "Variety of objects strike the eye from every side." It is probable there was not any estate belonging to the house; which was a building, as PLINY modestly tells us, rather of convenience than of magnificence: *Villa usibus copata, non sumptuosa castris*: "My villa is a commodious,

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

“not a sumptuous edifice.” Yet it evidently contained many apartments, and some of the rooms were large, but the height and proportion of each room are left to be supplied by imagination. The plans of *Laurentinum* ², although they are given us by different architects, are each of them the works of fancy, assisted by particular passages in this letter. MONTFAUCON has translated this epistle, and he concludes his remarks upon it, in a manner, that may serve as a motto to the translation exhibited in these sheets; his words are, *in rebus tam obscuris, ubi quancumque studio, quantacumque animi contentione rem suscipias, sententiarum diversitatem nunquam vitare possis. Quando descriptiones hujusmodi minutatim adornatae in linguam nostram convertuntur, voces quasdam singulares, quæ res significant non hodierni usus, non nisi hariolando interpreteris: in tali vero descriptionum conditione quisque suo modo hariolatur*: “Where there is so much obscurity, which cannot be cleared up by the most intense study, or the greatest application, a diversity of opinions is inevitable. When descriptions of this kind, so full of minute particulars, are to be translated into our language, and when certain words occur, which are now become obsolete, you must be obliged to guess often at the meaning; but where mere description is the object, every man guesses in his own manner.”

Nam specularibus, &c. The specularia of the ancients answered the effects of our glass windows. The *lapis specularis* was a transparent stone, which PLINY the elder tells us was originally found in the farthest parts of *Spain*. The nature of the stone, according to that historian, was remarkable. He says, *humorem hunc terræ quidam autumant crystalli modo glaciari*: “Some philosophers are of opinion, that the *lapis specularis* is a certain juice of the earth, which congeals after the manner of crystal.” The same author adds, that although this stone is of an extraordinary softness, yet it endures the heat of the summer, and the severity of the winter; nor is it liable to decay, or susceptible of any damage, except of burning. These qualities rendered the *saxum specularia* as useful, although perhaps not so transparent as glass.

Est contra medias cavædium hilare: “A cheerful quadrangular court stands in front of the portico.” The *cava*

² *L'antiquité expliquée*, Vol. 3. Liv. 3. chap. 14.

³ Lib. 6. Sect. 45.

ædium of the antients are divided by VITRUVIUS into five sorts. The *cavædium displuviatum* was the kind described in this epistle: a quadrangle encompassed by buildings on every side.

Mox triclinium satis pulchrum: the *triclinium* was the dining-room, the length of which, according to VITRUVIUS, ought to be twice the breadth. The antients, at their feasts, extended themselves upon beds. Each bed contained three persons, or sometimes four; but the form and manner of the *triclinia* are too sufficiently known, and exhibited, to require any farther explanation here.

Mox atrium sylvas, &c. I apprehend *atrium* to signify, in this place, *hariolandi gratiâ*, a vestibule; if not, it is another court of offices.

Cubiculum cum procætone: the *procæton* was a room appropriated for slaves to lie near their masters. A lobby, where servants might remain within call.

Inde balinea: the ruins of the Roman baths, as has been elsewhere observed *, still shew their magnificence. Persons of distinction had private baths at their country seats; such, as are here described by our author: but the bath was only used before meals, by those who bathed for cleanliness, or for health. On this account HORACE, when he reproves the Roman youth for their vices, takes notice, that they go to the baths immediately after a debauch, and walk through the streets with torches, carried before them in the open day; affectations equally unwholesome and ridiculous.

ANTONIUS MUSA introduced and recommended the exercise of cold bathing at *Rome*, where it never had been used, or at least had been long neglected till his time. But it then became so prevailing a fashion, that men of consular dignity strove to outvie one another in quaking and trembling in the coldest water, and in the coldest weather. SENECA values himself upon having the title of *PSYCHROLITATA*, and boasts, that he was able to dance in cold water on the first day of January. It is plain, he thought this regimen the best method to harden his constitution, and to prolong his life. When he was to die, he chose the warm bath with bleeding, as most proper to procure an easy dissolution, and an happy euthanasia.

* See the Essay on PLINY's life.

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

By the advice of ANTONIUS MUSA, HORACE left the hot baths of *Baiæ*, as hurtful to his eyes; and used the cold baths of *Clusum* and *Gabii*.

Nam mihi Baias

MUSA *supervacuus* ANTONIUS: *et tamen illis*
Me facit inuisum, gelidâ cum perluor undâ†.

“ For, MUSA’s knowledge and his friendly care
“ Bad me hot Baia’s noxious springs forbear;
“ And yet the people wonder, when I brave
“ The wholesome smartness of a colder wave.”

MUSA was the favourite physician of AUGUSTUS, whom he recovered, by the cold bath, from a dangerous disorder. This raised his reputation to such a degree, that all the physicians at *Rome* shared part of the honours he received, and were ever afterwards placed in equal rank with the *equites Romani*, [“ Roman knights.”] He is the celebrated physician, upon whom VIRGIL bestows that beautiful episode in the character of IAVIS; and who, after he had preserved AUGUSTUS in the manner already mentioned, unfortunately destroyed young MARCELLUS by the same method. So uncertain is the godlike art of cure.

The accounts, which some of the authors of antiquity give of their baths, are not only surprising, but incredible. They tell us of gilded roofs, jasper pillars, silver pumps, pavements studded with gems and jewels, and innumerable ornaments of prodigious cost and splendour. MACROBIUS goes so far as to mention SERGIUS ORATA, *qui primus balneas pensiles habuit*: “ who had built baths hanging in the “ air.” The *balinea*, which PLINY speaks of in this epistle, are rather convenient than pompous, rather neat than magnificent; and are no otherwise remarkable, than as they were an exception to the prevailing extravagances of those times; when the outrageous luxury of the Romans appeared in no instance so conspicuously as in their baths.

† *Cobæris calidâ piscina*: the *calida piscina* may signify, as has been translated, a warm bath: but it is properly a cistern to wash in, filled with warm water; a large pond near the house; which, by a communication with the *hypocaustum*,

† Horace. Epist. 15. Book 1.

became

became a hot bath upon any occasion, and was to be emptied and filled at pleasure.

Hinc turris erigitur, sub quâ diæta; &c. est et alia turris : sub hac triclinium, &c. PLINY is so very-particular in describing these two towers, and the chambers, which they contained, that we must be convinced, they consisted of two or three stories in height ; and of consequence stair cases must lead up to the several apartments. Monsieur FELIBIEN has placed four small stair cases in the angles of the portico, shaped in the form of the letter O ; but PLINY is so silent upon a point, where an explanation was much to be desired, that, at the distance of near seventeen hundred years, the situation of the stair-cases cannot be exactly ascertained.

Hinc cryptoporticus, prope publici operis, extenditur : " From hence the gallery extends itself, and appears with the " magnificence of a public building." We cannot know from this epistle, if our author found this *cryptoporticus* ready built, or if it was a work of his own design : in pursuance of a wandering guess, we may suppose² APOLLODORUS to have executed, and PLINY to have projected the plan. The apartment joining to the gallery was certainly built by SECUNDUS, *ipse posui* ; and it is probable so elegant a gallery was raised by the same artist, and was a particular edifice for PLINY's own use, and to his own taste.

In capite xysti deinceps cryptoporticus, horti diæta est. This garden apartment seems to have contained all those charms, which rendered *Laurentinum* so exquisitely delightful to our author. It was the *horti diæta*, rather than the *villa Laurentina*, that engaged his heart. Three particular points were studied in this building, warmth, prospect, and retirement : the first is described by the following sentence, *In hac heliocaminus quidam, aliq̄ xystum, alia mare, utraque solem.* It is very difficult, as has been already hinted, to find out any adequate expression in our language, that may convey the full idea and meaning of the *heliocaminus* : to call it a hot house, is only to give it an English denomination, that may signify a place of heat ; such it was undoubtedly, and, as such, it may convince us, that PLINY was an inhabitant of his *Laurentinum*, more in the winter, than in the summer

² A famous architect in the days of TRAJAN, who built the Trajan pillar, and the stone bridge over the Danube.

season. The diversity of prospects must be always agreeable: *a pedibus mare. says our author speaking of a closet, a tergo villæ, a capite sylvæ, tot facies horum totidem fenestris et distinguit et miscet.* The foaming of the sea, and the intermingled cottages among distant woods, composed perhaps of ever-greens, and forming a kind of winter garden, must be a great entertainment to the eye, and must give infinite delight to a speculative mind, which is always happy in beholding a variety in the works of nature. But the chief point, the retirement, was particularly studied, and was enjoyed in the utmost perfection, especially in PLINY'S bed-chamber, where, *interfaciens androm,* "an intermediate space between the walls drowned all noise;" so that our author was never disturbed by the roarings of the *Mediterranean*, in the most tempestuous seasons, nor by the mirth of his servants, during the Saturnalia.

These feasts, in honour of the god SATURN, continued three days. The time of their commencement in December. The slaves, during the solemnity, were permitted to act as masters, and while the feast was celebrated, no war was to be declared, nor was a criminal to be executed. Riot, dissoluteness, and all the extravagance of pleasure reigned. Such turbulent excesses were certainly disagreeable to a philosophic mind. The soul of PLINY was formed for studious privacy; and his pursuits of knowledge being frequently interrupted, in the more magnificent apartments of *Laurentinum*, he raised this additional building, at the end of his gallery, as an asylum to his studies, and a sanctuary to his speculations: he speaks of his favorite edifice in the rapturous stile of a lover: *Amores mei, re verâ amores.*

Here is my heart, here fix'd my soul's delight,
Here the calm chamber of forgetful night.

* That part of the Mediterranean sea next to *Ostia* and *Laurentum* is called by the old geographers, *Mare Insularum.*

† CATANZEVUS, who published an edition of PLINY'S epistles at Milan, in the year 1506, has the following remarkable note upon these festivals: *Saturnalibus licebat servis, sumptis pileis, non modo vesci cum dominis, sed pares honores illis in domo gerere, jus dicere, et omni ludorum genere remitti; Cujus rei vestigia in aliquibus Italix oppidis publicè adhuc restant post natalem redemptoris nostri.*

When

When the soft hours their downy wings compose,
 And gentle slumber o'er my senses flows,
 Freed from domestic noise, and public strife,
 I drink oblivion of an anxious life;
 Or, if I wake, attentively explore,
 And draw forth learning from her golden store.

As PLINY has omitted to mention the proportion of any one room in the garden apartment, or in the *Laurentinum* itself, SCAMOZZI, FILIBEN, and other authors, have endeavoured to supply his deficiency, by affixing supposititious dimensions to each particular chamber. But to what purpose need we repine after a more certain and exact description of *Laurentinum*? when our own country may, at this day, boast of a villa, where the grandeur of design, the delicacy of art, the beauty of proportion, and the justness of taste, appear in as high splendor, and with as true elegance, as *Greece* or *Italy* could ever celebrate, and at no greater distance from *London* than *Chiswick*.

E P I S T L E XVIII.

PLINY to JUNIUS MAURICUS.

WHAT more acceptable injunction can you lay upon me, than to desire I would look out for a preceptor to your brother's children? By this kind act you send me back to school again, and I resume, as it were, that most agreeable part of life. I sit among the young people as I used to do; and I meet with frequent instances, where the proficiency I have made in my studies, strikes them with great deference towards me. Let me give you a proof of it: they were rehearsing the other day before a large audience, and before many persons, as high in rank and quality as myself. They spoke till I came in without the least awe or hesitation, but at that moment they were all silent and abashed. I should not mention this incident, unless it were more to their praise, than to my own; and unless I could give you,

you, by it, a most hopeful prospect of a modest and proper education for your nephews. The part then, that remains more immediately for me, is to attend the professors, and their lectures, till I have gone through them, and then to send you my opinion of each, as minutely, as the limits of a letter will permit; and in such an exact manner, that you may imagine yourself present at their lectures, and examinations. This is a duty, and a task, which I owe both to you, and to the memory of your brother; more especially in an affair of such infinite consequence. For, what can be of greater importance to you, than that these children, I should call them your children, did you not now love them better, than if they were your own, should appear worthy of such a father, and such an uncle? I should certainly have claimed the trust, which you now repose in me, had you never requested it. Though I well knew what an invidious office it is, to select an instructor from among those numbers, who must be offended by being neglected. But whatever envy, hatred, or malice may fall upon me, on account of my choice for your nephews, I ought to be as little moved by it, as parents would be, on account of their own children. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The affections of PLINY were constantly continued, and carried down to the surviving posterity of his friends. His love knew no end. Death could not interrupt the current of his friendship. It flowed on *in omne volubilis ævum*. In the fourteenth epistle of the first book, we saw him recommending a husband, MINUTIUS ACILIANUS, to the daughter of ARULENUS RUSTICUS; and here we see him, intent in chusing a preceptor for the sons of that unfortunate Roman. With what resignation and ease of mind might a man quit the world, were he sure to leave such friends as PLINY behind him? friends firm and faithful to
his

his family, and to his children; fathers to the fatherless, supporters to the helpless, benefactors to the indigent: and, if one may use the expression, the viceregents of the Almighty here on earth. It is true, the children of RUSTICUS were left more immediately under the care of JUNIUS MAURICUS, their uncle; but we must observe, that MAURICUS takes no one step of importance, in regard to their welfare or education, without consulting and depending upon PLINY; who is resolved, not only to employ all his skill in choosing a preceptor for them, but to watch and guide these young Romans in their dawning of reason, and their first steps towards erudition.

There is one sentence in the epistle before us, to which a small alteration, perhaps, is allowable; because, as it now stands, it is impossible to be literally true. Our author, in speaking to MAURICUS of his nephews, says to him, "I should call them your children, did you not now love them better, than if they were your own." Had PLINY ever been a father, he must have known, that no man can love his nephews better, than he loves his own children. Let the kind regards of an uncle rise ever so high, let his tenderness to his nephews be never so extensive, they cannot equal the love of a parent. Paternal affection is beyond all description, and far out of the reach of words: it is only to be felt, not expressed. The compliment indeed would be lessened, but the sentence, methinks, would run more naturally thus: "I should call them your children, did you not *seem* to love them better, if possible, than your own." No man knows what he is to feel as a parent, till he is one.

EPISTLE XIX.

PLINY to VELIUS CEREALIS.

YOU desire me to rehearse my speech before a large number of my friends: I shall obey, because the command comes from you. But, I confess, I am not without my doubts and uneasiness upon the occasion: I cannot but reflect, that written speeches, when they are rehearsed, not only lose their force and spirit, but almost their very name. They want those incitements, that usually tend to grace the speech, and to stir up emulation in the speaker: I mean the assembly of judges, the concurrence of advocates, the expectation of the event, the high characters of the pleaders, and the different parties, into which the audience are divided: Add to this, the action of the orator himself, both in walking backwards and forwards, and in speaking; and that correspondent vigorous exertion of the body, which accompanies all the motions of the mind. From hence it happens, that those, who speak sitting, though in every other respect they have the same advantage with those, who speak in a standing posture, yet seem enervated and depressed; merely because they sit. And again, those, who rehearse, are still in a worse state: their eyes and hands, the great helps to elocution, are confined; and it is no wonder, if the attention of the audience droops, when it is neither soothed nor sharpened by any outward allurements. I must observe to you likewise, that the speech I mention is of the contentious and offensive kind. Besides, we are naturally apt to conclude, that what we have written with a good deal of difficulty, will be heard with little relish. And indeed, where can we find an auditor so upright,

upright, as not to be more pleased with what is sweet and harmonious, than what is grave and nervous? There often arises too, upon these occasions, a very shameful disagreement between the judges and the audience; the former expecting very different speeches from what please the latter; and yet every hearer ought to act as impartially, as if he came there to sit in judgement. However, it may so happen, that, notwithstanding all these difficulties, the novelty of the performance may be an advantage to it. The novelty will certainly be acceptable to our own people. There is indeed amongst the Greeks, a custom, which, though very different from this, bears some distant resemblance to it. For, as it is their practice, when they reverse laws, as contrary to acts formerly passed, to compare them with other laws in being; so I, to demonstrate, that what I urged and contended for, was plainly included in the law against bribery, have been obliged to compare it, not only with other laws, but with the several clauses contained in that law itself. The ignorant will not approve of this method; and the less favour it finds with them, the more it ought to meet with from the learned. But, if you will absolutely have me proceed in this rehearsal, no persons shall be present, except men of learning. However, I desire you will thoroughly consider within yourself, whether I should attempt the performance, or not: weigh all the arguments I have given you on one side, and on the other, and then let your reason determine. But remember, it is your judgement, not mine, will be called in question: my obedience will sufficiently plead my excuse. Farewell.

out with her latest breath, "O that wicked, that treacherous, that more than perjured villain! who has perjured himself, although he swore by his son's head."

This is an oath, which REGULUS makes use of no less wickedly, than frequently; and by which he calls down the anger of the gods, whom he provokes by daily perjuries, upon the head of his unhappy boy.

The rich consular VELLEIUS BLÆSUS finding himself extremely ill, in that sickness, which proved his last, was desirous to alter his will. REGULUS, who from a new will expected, that something might possibly accrue to himself, especially as he had lately taken great pains to insinuate himself into BLÆSUS, was perpetually entreating and beseeching the physicians, that they would find out some method to prolong the life of this dear man. But, as soon as the new will was signed, he altered his countenance, and spoke in another strain to the same physicians: "How long, says he, will you torment this miserable mortal? Why will you hinder him from dying, when your whole art cannot keep him alive?" BLÆSUS dies, and, as if he had overheard REGULUS, did not leave him a mite.

Two stories surely are enough, unless by the scholastic law you insist upon a third. I have it ready upon the same theme. AURELIA, a woman of high dress and parade, was about making her will; and at that time had dressed herself in one of her finest suits of cloaths. REGULUS, when he came to witness the will, said to her, "Let me intreat you to leave me these sumptuous garments." AURELIA imagined he was in jest, but he seriously persisted in his request: in short, he obliged the lady to open her will, and to bequeath him the cloaths she then wore; nay whilst she was writing, he observed every syllable, and looked over her to see, if she really bequeathed

queathed him the legacy. But AURELIA is alive and well ; though he forced her to act towards him, as if she had been at the point of death : and thus he catches at inheritances and legacies, as if he deserved them.

But why do I stay any longer in a city, where knavery and falshood meet with far greater rewards, than either modesty or virtue ? Look at REGULUS, who, from a poor mean creature, has raised himself by his villainies to so plentiful a fortune, that, as he told me himself, he consulted his stars once, to know how soon he should be worth ^b six thousand great sesterces, and he found by the sacrifice, the entrails of which were double, that he should be worth twice that sum. And he certainly will, if he goes on, as he has begun, in this most wicked kind of imposition, by making the last wills of other people subservient to his own dictates and desires. Adieu.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

These stories, at the time they were told, when many of the persons mentioned were living, the characters known, and every circumstance perfectly understood, must have afforded great matter of speculation and raillery at Rome. They have not lost their value in the space of sixteen hundred years. The colours are still strong and lively, and we are present at the scene betwixt REGULUS and VERANIA : we see him sitting by her bed-side : we view him acting the part of an astrologer, and casting a figure upon his fingers : He mutters to himself, he assumes an air of wisdom, he enquires into her age, and the hour of her birth ; and he practises all the mysterious arts of a second sighted conju-

^b [*Sextertium sexcenties*] amount to more than four hundred and eighty four thousand pounds of our money. There were two sorts of sesterces, the great and the small ; the former of which are here spoken of.

rer. So far we may laugh, but what makes the hypocrite more seriously detestable, is to find by the last words of VERANIA, that he had pawned the life of his son [*sibi per salutem filii pejerasset*] in sanction of his avaricious designs, and in support of his consummate hypocrisy. The *Regulæ* of our days pawn their souls, and swear to falsehoods by the hopes of their salvation: and though the asseverations are different, they are made to serve the same iniquitous purposes, and they generally meet with the same success.

Illa, ut in periculo, credula: "She credulous, like a person in danger." Here is an evident instance of PLINY'S good-nature. The words, *ut in periculo*, are inserted merely to defend a lady, whose behaviour stood in great need of some apology: for if REGULUS had been the declared enemy of her husband PISO, and after his death had been equally odious to herself, [*Marito inimicissimus, ipsi invissimus*] nothing but the fear of dying could have excused a conduct so unbecoming the widow of PISO, and so derogatory to a woman of sense.

BLÆSUS moritur, REGULO ne tantulum quidem: "BLÆSUS dies, not a mite for REGULUS." I dare say, whoever looks into this epistle, will be much rejoiced at the disappointment of REGULUS. There is something so extremely ungenerous and cruel in wishing for the convulsive pangs, and last groans of our fellow creature; that it must be a nature savagely brutal to admit of any such thoughts: and yet this was a character very common at Rome. The *Hæredipeta* are frequently mentioned by most of the classic authors. The fifth satir of the second book of HORACE, and the latter end of JUVENAL'S twelfth satir, are entirely upon that topic. BEN. JOHNSON has also formed his *Volpone* upon the same plan; though CORBACCIO is still a more extraordinary miser than REGULUS. The whole comedy shews to what a pitch of wickedness and folly this particular species of avarice can drive mankind.

The story of AURELIA gives us still a farther insight into REGULUS, who condescends even to beg old cloaths, rather than not be entitled to a legacy. It is a maxim with the avaricious to get whatever they can: they think nothing too mean to ask, nothing too fordid to wish for. A covetous man has so voracious an appetite, and so quick a digestion, that he can never be satisfied. His desires are like a whirlpool, ready to swallow up whatever floats within reach,

BOOK II.

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reach, and to take in every straw and atom, that comes within the circle. But, if we were glad to find **REGULUS** frustrated in his expectations of a legacy from **VELLEIUS BLÆSUS**, it will be some pleasure to imagine, that **AURELIA** outlived him, or that she wore this particular rich suit of cloaths * long enough to reduce it into a tattered legacy at her death.

* It was the custom in England, within these hundred years, to leave suits of cloaths as legacies to particular friends and relations.

The End of the SECOND BOOK.



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PLINY'S EPISTLES.

BOOK III.

EPISTLE I.

PLINY to CALVISIUS.



Cannot recollect, that I have ever spent my time more agreeably than lately with SPURINNA: inasmuch, that, if I live to grow old, there is no man, whom I should think, at that period of life, more worthy of my imitation. Nothing can be more remarkably distinguished than his way of living; and, as I take delight in observing the regular course of the planets, I have the same sort of pleasure, in considering the decent order, in which men pass their days, especially men in years. In young men, perhaps some irregularity and disorder may not be unbecoming: but in the down-hill

hill of life, all things should be carried on smoothly and methodically. The time of industry is then passed, and the allurements of ambition are become shameful.

SPURINNA keeps to this rule most religiously: the greatest trifles, trifles, if they were not his daily employment, he moves round in one unvaried rotation, and regularity.

In a morning, he remains some time ruminating in his bed: he calls for his cloaths about eight o'clock, and takes a walk generally of three miles, not only for the exercise of his body, but of his mind. If his friends are with him, they converse and dispute upon various, useful, and polite subjects: if he is alone, a book is read to him; which is sometimes the case, even when his friends are present, provided they shew no aversion to it. As soon as he comes in, he sits down; and then again some book is taken up, or some conversation, preferable to a book, is pursued: after which, he goes out in his chariot, and takes with him his wife, a woman of singular merit; or else one of his friends; and of late I was the person. It is then, then, you enjoy the sweets of his private conversation: it is then he opens to you the stories of antiquity: what actions, what men do you hear of! what precepts do you then imbibe! But, whilst you learn, so excellently tempered is his modesty, he does not seem to dictate. After an excursion, in this manner, of about seven miles, he walks again a mile; and then repofes himself, or goes up to his chamber to write: and his writings, both in Greek and Latin, are masterly, especially his lyrics. His poetry is so wonderfully sweet, so easy, and, at the same time, so gay, that the only additional graces it can receive are from the unfeigned character of the author. When they bring him word, that the hour of bathing is come, which, in winter, is at three o'clock in the afternoon; and, in summer,
at

at two, if there is no wind; he walks quite undressed in the sun; and then plays at tennis violently, and for a long time together. This is a kind of exercise, which he uses as a weapon against the attacks of old age. After bathing he goes to bed, chusing not to eat the moment he comes out of the bath. In the mean while, something amusing and of no consequence is read to him; and his friends, during all this interval, are at liberty to divert themselves, either in the same manner, or in any other they chuse. When supper is served, you find it no less neat than frugal, and the whole service is in pure antique silver. He has likewise a set of Corinthian plate, which he sometimes uses; but seems rather to be pleased with it, than proud of it. We are often entertained at supper with a comedy; that even pleasures may be seasoned with study. The supper generally breaks in upon the night, even in summer: and yet a meal lengthened out by so much politeness can never appear tedious. By these means, he has his hearing and eye-sight entire, and his body is perfectly active, and vigorous, although he is turned of seventy seven. The only mark of age he discovers, is prudence. My wishes, and my thoughts, lead me to look forward to this kind of life; which I am determined to enter upon, with the utmost eagerness, as soon as I am so far advanced in years, that I can plead a sufficient excuse for my retreat. In the mean while, I am engaged in a multiplicity of business; in which, however, I comfort myself with the example of SPURINNA: for he also, as long as he thought he was in honour obliged, applied himself to the service of the state; he has passed through the several magistracies, he has governed provinces, and he has earned by his toils the tranquillity, which he now possesses. I set myself, therefore, the same course, and the same boundaries: and I declare this to you, under my hand, that, if I should go beyond the limits,

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

mits, I have prescribed, you may have full commission to call me back, to be judged by my own letter; and command me to retire, whenever you think I shall not run the hazard of being reproached for my idleness. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This letter is full of latent beauties, but they, here and there, seem to want a little help to bring them forward, and to rescue them from obscurity. Conciseness in familiar letters is not only allowable, but almost inevitable; and yet PLINY stands condemned of never sitting down to write an epistle, without an intention of publishing it. Admitting the accusation to be true, he sat down to a very good purpose; and the polite world are much obliged to him, for the pains he has taken, to transmit his thoughts, with elegance and correctness, to posterity. But I am apt to think he had no such design: his heart flowed through his pen; and if his sentiments are more refined, his turns more easy, and his style more delicate than ordinary, these beauties are owing to the excellence of his genius, and the perfection of his nature; and not to that vanity, which makes a man try to appear better and wiser, than he really is, either in inclination, or capacity. It is true, PLINY desires, that this letter to CALVISIUS may be kept: but what is his motive for that request? It is to be kept as a witness against himself, as a check to his ambition, and as a curb to his pursuit of public honours. He thinks there is a time, when even glory may be satiated; and he resolves to retire, when the labours of the day have justified his impatience for the evening's rest. But if he should fall into a very common error, of being unwilling to quit the reins of power, and to repose within the chariot, which he had driven, he intreats CALVISIUS, to stop him in his career of grandeur, by producing this epistle, and setting before his eyes the picture of the wife SPURINA, thus drawn by himself; as the portrait, he should wish to resemble in the decline of years, *cum industria sera, et turpis ambitio est*: "When industry is ill timed, and ambition is a reproach."

The strange disorder, in which PLINY'S epistles are thrown together, is never enough to be regretted. No characters,

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B O O K III.

acters, unless such as happen to be contained in one letter, are preserved entire; no historical facts are connected; no unity of time, or place, is considered: serious reflexions, amusing trifles, public acts, and private business, are all blended together with as little skill, or consideration, as was ever bestowed upon any author. But, not to dwell upon observations, that will necessarily occur too often, throughout this work, let us remember, that in the seventh epistle of the preceding book, VESTRICIUS SPURINNA is represented to us, returning in melancholy triumph, on the loss of his son COTTIUS, from a peaceful victory he obtained over those German savages, the *Bructeri*;

A race unpolish'd, but inur'd to toil,
Rough as their heav'n, and barren as their soil *.

The trite comparison of old men to the setting sun is very just; because their glory dazzles, when their heat has no longer influence: but they never appear more awfully venerable, than when they have run their race of vigour with universal applause; and are retired, to enjoy their prize of fame, with humility, and in peace: or, as ^b HOMER has described them, when from warriors they become counsellors, when their strength of body is succeeded by an equal strength of mind, and when they can look upon the charms of beauty with the eye of prudence, and not of love.

VESTRICIUS SPURINNA is described in this epistle, as an old man, of an excellent disposition. He had spent his youth in military actions, and in the soldierly service of his country: he had seen various revolutions, and had outlived several emperors: and having received from TRAJAN the honour of an equestrian statue, he retired to his country seat, and passed his life in the temperate and regular manner described in this epistle; a manner, which captivated PLINY so extremely, that, not to use his own words again, we may express his thoughts and wishes, in the following admirable lines, from Mr. DRYDEN:

So would I live, such gradual death to find,
Like timely fruit, not shaken by the wind,

* FENTON.

^b See HOMER. Iliad. 3. v. 146.

But

P L I N Y ' s E P I S T L E S .

But ripely dropping from the sapless bough,
 And, dying, nothing to myself would owe.
 Thus daily changing, with a duller taste
 Of less'ning joys, I by degrees would waste.
 Still quitting ground by unperceiv'd decay,
 And steal myself from life, and melt away.

E P I S T L E II.

P L I N Y to M A X I M U S .

WHAT I should readily have offered to any of your friends, if my power were equal to yours, I now think I have a kind of right to request for mine. ARRIANUS MATURIUS is a man, who makes the most considerable figure among the *Alli-nates*. When I mention him as a person, who makes the most considerable figure, I do not mean in point of riches, although his wealth is very great; but I mean, in morality, justice, wisdom, and prudence. I make use of his advice, in my affairs, and of his judgement, in my studies; because he excels in integrity, truth, and experience. He loves me, (I think I can find no stronger expression) as you love me. He has no thirst for preferment; and, for that reason, has kept himself in the order of knighthood, when he might easily have risen to the highest honours. But it is my part, to bring him forward with all the lustre I am able. And therefore, I have a most earnest desire, to dignify him without his expectation, without his knowledge, and perhaps against his will. But, what I would bestow on him, should be highly honourable, but no way burthenfome: a favour of this sort, I beseech you, to grant me for him, as soon as any opportunity offers. You will find me, you will find him, most gratefully sensible of the obligation: for, although he has made no such request, he will receive it with as much gratitude, as if he had. Farewell.

O B S E R -

OBSERVATIONS.

The intimacy between PLINY and ARRIANUS MATURIUS appears from the many epistles, addressed by the former to the latter. To sum them up together: the second epistle of the first book, the eleventh and twelfth epistles of the second book, the eighth and twelfth epistles of the fourth book, the second epistle of the sixth book, and the twenty first epistle of the eighth book are all written, or, at least, entitled to ARRIANUS, and ought to have been placed together, if method or order had been preserved in any one edition of the author before us. The particular request, made by PLINY for his friend, is not specified. He leaves the choice and disposition of it to MAXIMUS, and only asks for an employment of honour, dignity, and ease. There is a politeness in this epistle, that prevents all commendation, and bespeaks its own praise. It is written to GAVIUS MAXIMUS, who was probably at this time *Præfectus Prætorie*, commander of the prætorian cohorts, or colonel of the life-guard; an office of great trust and nearness to the emperor's person. It was first instituted by AUGUSTUS, and was exactly answerable to the master of horse under the dictators. There may be occasion to speak of GAVIUS MAXIMUS hereafter; but, the surmise of what dignity he bore at this juncture, may not be improper, as it is plain from the letter itself, that the power of GAVIUS must have been very extensive, since PLINY applies to him, as to a person, who could bestow upon ARRIANUS almost what employment he pleased. Let us enquire into some particulars of ARRIANUS. There are many persons of that name. ARRIANUS MATURIUS, the subject of this epistle, was bred up at the feet of EPICURETUS, whose principles he so strongly imbibed, that he himself made afterwards a considerable figure as a philosopher; and was, besides, a learned geographer, and an excellent historian. He was by birth an Asiatic; born at *Nicomædia*, the capital city of *Bithynia*. But our author speaks of him here as an inhabitant of *Adrienum*, the situation of which is thus given us by PLINY the elder. *Sequitur decima regio Italia, Adriatico mari appositæ, cujus Venetia: fluvius Silis ex montibus Tarvisanis: oppidum Altinum, &c.* "The next is the tenth region of Italy, opposite to the Adriatic sea: in this region is Venetia: the
 " river

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

“ river *Silis* rising from the *Tarvisian* mountains: the “ city *Alinum*, &c.” Thus we see it was placed upon the *Adriatic* shore, and, according to STRABO, near *Ravenna*^c: the ruins of it are still to be seen upon the river *Sile*. There is no account given, why ARRIANUS settled at *Alinum*. The beauty of the place, which is spoken of by MARTIAL^d, might possibly have been his inducement: but, by what can be collected from this epistle, the date whereof is no ways to be ascertained, he lived there privately; and rather illustrious in character, than in station; rich, not powerful; void of ambition, but full of gratitude for favours conferred; capable of any employment, desirous of none; fond of retirement, but ready to serve his country, when called upon. PLINY, ever eager to bring forward a genius, endeavours to recommend MATURIUS to the affection of MAXIMUS. It is reasonable to believe, he succeeded in his design, and, by this letter, laid the foundation of that grandeur, and those honours, which ARRIANUS afterwards enjoyed; for history assures us, that his extraordinary merit, and great capacity, raised him to the dignity of a consul, and the government of *Cappadocia*, under the emperor ADRIAN.

^c Vid. STRABO. Lib. 5.

^d Lib. 4. Epig. 25.

EPISTLE III.

PLINY to CORELLIA HISPULLA.

I Am really in doubt, whether I most loved, or admired, that great and good man, your father. For your own sake, and in honour to his memory, I retain the greatest affection for you; and therefore, it is impossible for me not to desire, and to endeavour, as far as lies in my power, that your son should be like his grandfather. I confess, I should chuse to have him resemble his grandfather by his mother: not that I am ignorant, that his grandfather, on the father's side, was a man of eminence and reputation: his father too, and his uncle, were both of distinguished

guished characters. He will certainly resemble all his relations, if he has the advantage of a proper, liberal education; in which the chief point is the person, from whom he is to receive his first impressions. His infancy has hitherto kept him within the walls of your own house; and he has had masters at home, where there was little, or no room, to make dangerous, or indeed any mistakes: but his studies must now bring him forward, beyond those limits; and it is time to look out for a Latin professor of rhetoric, whose scholastic discipline, whose modesty, and whose virtue are manifestly apparent. Our young man, among the other gifts of nature, and fortune, has the recommendation of a beautiful person; which makes it necessary, that, in this dangerous part of life, his master should not only be a preceptor, but a guardian, and a guide. I think, I may venture to point out to you JULIUS GENITOR. I love him; but that love of him by no means blinds my judgement, but proceeds from it. He is a man irreproachable in his morals, and grave in his deportment; perhaps too strict for the licentiousness of these times. There are many, from whom you may be informed of his power in eloquence. His manner of speaking has a certain freedom, and openness, that discovers itself at once. The outward appearance, indeed, of a man's life does not shew the inward labyrinths, and deep recesses of the soul: in that respect let me be answerable for GENITOR. Your son is sure to hear nothing from him, but what will be improving. He is sure to learn nothing from him, of which he ought to remain ignorant; and he will be taught by him, as often as he would by you, or by me, how much he ought to set his ancestors before his eyes, and how many great and noble names he is to keep up and sustain. Deliver him then, under the auspicious favour of the Gods, to this preceptor, who will first form his manners, and afterwards teach

him eloquence: for, without morals, eloquence is a dangerous art. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This epistle naturally leads our thoughts to education, the most difficult point in the world to be conducted with that nice degree of wisdom, which is necessary towards bringing youth to a proper maturity and perfection. Children, like various sorts of trees, are to be trimmed and pruned at different seasons, according to the radical principles of their nature. Such, who sprout out too exuberantly, and grow wild, are to be kept down and confined, till they fall into form and regularity. Some again will not come forward without great nourishment, much sun-shine, and constant encouragement. Those only are to be thrown out of the garden of education, who are never likely to make a head, and whose sap lies all at the bottom.

The authors, who have written on the subject of education, are numerous; and they all agree, as indeed they all must, that the person, who is to have the immediate inspection and care of a young man, ought to be as distinguished for morals, as for knowledge; and as strict in virtue, as diligent in study. These are the exact sentiments of PLINY, in this epistle to CORELLIA HISPULLA.

EPISTLE IV.

PLINY to MACRINUS.

ALTHOUGH I have met with approbation, in what I have done, both from my friends, who were present, and from the general voice of mankind; yet I look upon it of great consequence to me, to know your sentiments: for, as I should have wished, before the affair was undertaken, to have had your advice; so, now it is over, I no less earnestly desire to receive your opinion. When I was gone into *Tuscany*, to execute a public work, at my own expence, and had received my pass as treasurer; the deputies from the province of *Andalusia*, who intended to complain of CÆCILIUS CLASSICUS, during
the

the time of his being proconsul there, petitioned the senate to appoint me for their advocate. My colleagues in the treasury, my best and most affectionate friends, endeavoured to excuse and exempt me from that burden, by representing the necessity of my attendance for the discharge of our common duty. The decree, which passed, upon this occasion, in the senate, was very much to my honour. It was, that "I should be advocate for these provincials, if they could obtain my own consent." The deputies, being again brought into the senate, renewed their request, in my presence, that I should be appointed their advocate; imploring the benefit of my faithful assistance; which they had experienced against MASSA BÆBIUS; and alledging the right they had to my patronage. A loud and unanimous assent of the senate followed; such as usually foreruns the pronouncing their decrees. Upon which, I thus addressed myself to the senate: "Conscript fathers; I now no longer think, that I offered any just reason of excuse." Both the modesty, and the manner of my speech, pleased them. Not only the consent of the senate, although that chiefly, but other motives, of less value indeed, though many in number, brought me to this resolution. I remembered, that our ancestors used, of their own accord, to prosecute the injuries offered to their private and particular guests: for which reason, I thought it much more shameful, to give up the rights of public hospitality. Besides, when I recollected how many difficulties, and even dangers, I had undergone, in my former assistance, in the cause of these *Andalusians*, it seemed necessary for me, to preserve the memory of my past services, by adding to them a new instance of friendship. For, such is the nature of mankind, that the gratitude for all former obligations is lost, unless you continue it by adding new favours; and though you have often obliged, yet one denial is for

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

ever remembered. I was farther induced to this undertaking, because CLASSICUS was dead, and consequently the accusation of a senator, which, in cases of this kind, is usually the most irksome and disagreeable part of the duty, was removed. I imagined, therefore, I should gain as much reputation by this cause, without making any enemies, as if CLASSICUS were still alive. Lastly, I thought, if I discharged this office for them now, a third time, I might more easily find an excuse, if, hereafter, they should happen to complain of any person, against whom I ought not to appear. For since we must put some period to all our offices of friendship, we can then assume that liberty with a better grace, when we have prepared the way to it by many former acts of kindness.

You have heard the motives of my resolution: it remains, that you give your judgement on one side, or the other; in doing which, the honest freedom of your dissent will be equally as agreeable to me, as the authority of your approbation. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

Although, at first sight, this epistle may seem to carry in it an air of vanity, yet, upon examination, it will be found to have none. Vanity consists in an unnecessary boast of our own merits, or of praises bestowed upon us, whether well or ill grounded. This was not PLINY'S case. He writes to a friend, to condemn, or approve, what he had done. He cannot then avoid telling the facts as they were; and he makes no proud comments upon those facts, but modestly says, that the unanimous consent of the senate, given in a manner much to his honour, joined to some other considerations, induced him to undertake the cause of the *Andalusians*: an account of which, though it ought to have preceded this letter, will be found in the ninth epistle of this book.

Legati provincie Beticæ, questuri de proconsulatu CÆCILII CLASSICI, advocatum me a senatu petierunt: "The Legates
" of

“ of the province of Bætica moving for an enquiry into the
 “ proconsulship of CÆCILIUS CLASSICUS, claimed me, in
 “ the senate, as their advocate.” The *advocatus*, in the
 primitive, uncorrupted ages of *Rome*, signified not only the
 lawyer, but the friend; a disinterested person, who under-
 took the defence of his client, upon the principles of gene-
 rosity, and the motives of true honour; one, who acted not
 only without view of reward, but absolutely from a desire
 of relieving the oppressed, and giving, not selling, justice to
 the injured. As bribery and baseness made their way into
 the state, the office of advocate became, like other offices,
 mercenary and venal. TACITUS expressly says, *neq̄ quid-*
quam publice mercis tam venale fuit quam advocatorum per-
fidia: “ Among even commodities, that bore a public
 “ price, nothing was so avowedly saleable as the wavering
 “ faith of the advocates.” That historian then goes on to
 mention a Roman knight, named SAMIUS, who, finding
 that he had been betrayed by his advocate, fell upon his
 own sword in the house of the betrayer: an ill-judged kind
 of revenge, and of the same sort with that romantic piece
 of honour in the *Prussian* officer, who, being struck at the
 head of his regiment by the prince royal, drew out his pistol
 and shot himself. If death is to ensue in these cases, let it
 fall upon the guilty, not the innocent; or, to quote the
 words of a modern author, “ If I am to die, it shall be for
 “ ridding the world of an arrant villain.” But the *Anda-*
lusians knew PLINY so well, that they requested him as an
 advocate, in the original sense of the word. They desired,
 he might appear openly as their friend, because they were
 sure, he would act honestly as their lawyer.

Ut daret provincialibus patronus, si ab ipso me impetrassent:
 “ The senate declared, that I should be a patron to the pro-
 “ vinces, if they could prevail upon me to assume that cha-
 “ racter.” The word *patronus* here, like the preceding
 word *advocatus*, refers to the sense and meaning it bore,
 when the *patroni* were first instituted at *Rome*. The clients
 constantly sheltered themselves under the wings of their
 patrons, and were to be protected by them from all birds
 of prey whatever: so that *patrocini fœdus*, which was
 urged by the *Andalusians* in regard of PLINY, was the league
 of patronage, the indispensable tie of the patron to his

TACIT. Annal. lib. xi. cap. 5.

R. 3

client.

client. " You became formerly, said the *Battici*, our patron ; we had the happiness to be your clients : the sacred covenant still subsists between these two relations, and you ought not to break your part of that covenant, since we never failed in ours."

Veniebat in mentem priores nostros etiam singulorum hospitum injurias accusationibus voluntariis excusatos, quo deformius arbitrabar publici hospitii jura negligere : " I could not avoid recollecting, that our ancestors voluntarily punished and brought to justice the persons, who had infringed private hospitality: their resentments extended to individuals: I should deem it therefore uncommon baseness in me not to protect the public." Hospitality was one of the reigning virtues among the ancients: the laws of it were esteemed sacred and inviolable. ROMULUS set the first example of public hospitality to his people, by making his new colony an asylum for all strangers, who would resort to it. The Greeks have two expressive words, to signify public and private hospitality. The first they call *Προξενία*, the last *Ἰδιοξενία*. The duties of private hospitality were friendship, protection, faith, and entertainment; and we may observe by this epistle, that the Romans looked upon themselves so indispensably bound to the discharge of these duties, that they voluntarily undertook the cause of their guests, and avenged the wrongs, that the stranger had suffered, even before he had been received within their gates. " If then, says PLINY, our ancestors acted in this generous manner towards particular persons, how much more ought I to exert myself in defence of a whole people, each of whom I may look upon as my client, my guest, and my friend?"

The other parts of this letter need no explanation; they are unhappily too true. It must be allowed, that the refusal of any one request blots out, and utterly defaces all former obligations: such, alas! is the general ingratitude of mankind. Nor has PLINY less reason on his side, where he says, it is dangerous to provoke a senator. Great men, like bees, must remain undisturbed in their cell; for whoever provokes one of the swarm, runs the hazard of being stung by the whole hive, at least, by the majority,

BOOK III.

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EPISTLE V.

PLINY to MACER.

I Am extremely pleased, that you read my uncle's books so diligently, as to be desirous to procure them all, and to know exactly, of what books he has been the author. I will perform the part of an index; and will also point out to you the order, in which they were written: a piece of knowledge, that cannot be unacceptable to the learned.

When he had a command in the army^f, he composed a treatise, of equal spirit and correctness, concerning the art of managing the javelin on horseback.

Two books on the life of POMPONIUS SECUNDUS, in whose affections he had always held a very particular place; and therefore these memoirs were written in gratitude to the memory of such a friend.

Twenty books of the wars of *Germany*, in which he has included all the wars we ever had with the *Germans*. He began this performance when he was an officer in *Germany*, and was admonished to it by a dream; for, in his sleep, he saw the figure of DRUSUS NERO stand before him, who, after having extended his conquests over the greatest part of *Germany*, died there. The apparition recommended the memory of his actions to my uncle, and entreated him to rescue his name from the injury of oblivion.

Three books, entituled, *The men of letters*. Their bulk required them to be divided into six volumes; and in these he begins with the orator in his cradle, and perfects him at the bar.

^f The latin is, *Cum præfectus ala militaret*. Each wing of the Roman army had a præfect appointed by the consul, who governed in the same manner as the legionary tribunes.

In his younger years, under NERO's government, he wrote eight books, concerning the doubtful figures of grammar. The slavery of those times had rendered all performances of a freer and a higher nature dangerous.

One and thirty books, that are a continuation of AUFIDIUS BASSUS's history.

Seven and thirty books of natural history: a diffuse work, learned, and not less diversified than nature itself.

You wonder, how a man, so constantly employed in business, could write so many volumes, many of which were upon such nice subjects; and your wonder will still increase, when you are told, that he was a pleader for some years, and that he died at the age of fifty six. The rest of his time was filled up, and embarrassed by those great employments, which his favour with several of our emperors procured him: but he was a most piercing genius, incredibly fond of knowledge, with the closest application.

He constantly began his nocturnal lucubrations at the feast of VULCAN^s; not because it was an auspicious season, but, because it was a proper time for study: in the summer, at the beginning of the night; but in winter, at one o'clock in the morning, or, at latest, at two, often at twelve at midnight. He made his hours of sleep perfectly convenientⁿ; sometimes, between his hours of study, and sometimes, as soon as they were over. Before it was day, he waited on the emperor VESPASIAN, who allotted his nights also to study; and from thence he proceeded to execute the orders he had received: then he returned home, and again employed his spare time in study. After dinner, a meal, which, according to

^s The *Vulcanalia* began on the twenty third of *August*.

ⁿ *Erat sane somni paratissimi*. Some editions have it, *somni paratissimi*: "a little sleep sufficed him." The first seems most suitable to what follows.

the custom of our ancestors, he made light and easy, in the summer, if he had any leisure, he lay down in the sun, whilst a book was read to him; upon which he criticised, and took out particular passages: for he never read any thing without making an extract of it; it being his constant saying, that "no book was so bad, but something might be learned from it." After having thus basked himself in the sun, he commonly bathed in cold water, and then eat a little, and slept less. Then again, as if it had been a new day, he studied till supper time; and during supper a book was read, and cursory remarks made upon it. I remember, when one of his friends reprimanded the person, who was reading, for some wrong pronunciation, and obliged him to begin again, my uncle said to his friend, "Did you understand what he read?" to which the other replied, "he did;" "why then, rejoined my uncle, would you force him to begin again? we have lost above ten lines by your interruption." So parsimonious was he of his time. In summer, he rose from supper before it was dark; in winter, soon after the close of night: and this as punctually, as if it had been an indispensable law; nay, he did it amidst all his business, and the hurry of the city. In the country, the time of bathing only was exempt from study. When I mention bathing, I mean the time when he was actually in the bath: for, whilst he was rubbed and wiped, he either heard something read to him, or dictated something to others. Upon a journey, released, as it were, from the cares, which at other times molested him, he applied himself to this single labour only. His amanuensis, who went with him with a book, and all the implements of writing, wore gloves upon his hands in winter, lest the severity of the weather should make him lose any time: and, for that reason, my uncle himself, when in *Rome*, was always carried in a chair. I remember, I was once reprimanded

reprimanded by him for walking. "You need not," says he, mispend your hours in this manner:" for he thought all time lost, that was not employed in study. By this constant application he finished so many volumes; and left me one hundred and sixty books of choice remarks, written on both sides, and in a very small hand, which makes them still more numerous. He told me, that when he was governor in *Spain*, he might have sold these commentaries to LARTIUS LICINIUS for four hundred thousand sesterces¹; and at that time they were less voluminous.

Does he not seem to you, upon knowing how much he has read, and how much he has wrote, never to have been in any public post, nor ever in favour with any one of our emperors? Again, when you hear with what assiduity he prosecuted his studies, does he not seem, neither to have read, nor to have wrote enough? For, what would not those employments hinder? or, what would not such application effect? I always smile, therefore, when they call me studious, who, in comparison of him, am the idlest man alive; and yet it is only when compared to him; for ~~the services I am employed in, towards the public, and towards my friends, take up all my hours.~~ But which of those, who dedicate even their whole life to literature, when compared to him, would not blush, as if they had passed their time in sleep and indolence? I have run out my letter into a tedious length, though I only intended to write what you required, a list of the books my uncle left. However, I am confident, that what I have told you will be as acceptable as the books themselves: because those particulars may excite you not only to read them, but may spur you up to an emulation of equalling him, in some branches of his labour. Farewell.

¹ [Quadringentis millibus nummum] equal to 3229 l. 3 s. 4 d.

OBSERVATIONS.

Nulla dies sine libro, was the maxim, which seems to have governed the elder PLINY's studies: and yet, from amongst the many volumes he wrote, none have escaped down to our times, except his natural history; a work of greater labour than reputation. Monsieur BAYLE condemns him as too credulous an author; and Monsieur ROLLIN, who speaks more advantageously of him, says, he is full of faults. He was, in some measure, excusable for his credulity, as he was of a religion, that led him to believe innumerable absurdities: and his faults may claim some indulgence, as he wrote on subjects, which were then extremely difficult and dark. Of all parts of learning, natural philosophy has received the greatest improvements, within these latter ages. No real knowledge, no true insight into the works of nature, could possibly be attained, from the confused notions and dark expressions of the old philosophers and schoolmen: but, from the time that experimental philosophy has been cultivated among us, a noble foundation has been laid for discovering the true methods, which almighty GOD has thought fit to establish, in carrying on his wise purposes throughout this material world. Our faculties are permitted to make as great a progress in these discoveries, as the state of our condition here requires; and farther we cannot, because we need not, go. Therefore, in matters purely speculative, where the good of mankind is not concerned, perhaps those determinations in philosophy, which seem to us perfectly well founded, and built on rocks immoveable, may hereafter be as much decried, as the notions of PLINY and ARISTOTLE are at present. However, PLINY, notwithstanding the unfashionableness of his philosophy, still preserves some degree of veneration: he is often quoted; and, perhaps, is most entertaining where he is least useful. He was a man bred up, we find, to arms and erudition; he made a considerable figure in the camp and at the council-board; and was greatly esteemed by VESPASIAN and TITUS. His manner of life, and a list of all his writings, are more particularly specified in this epistle, than in any other place: but the wonder, at his having written so much on such difficult subjects, and amidst such constant business, in some measure ceases, when we recollect the works and employments of our own countryman, the great lord BACON;

EPISTLE

EPISTLE VI.

PLINY to CATILIUS SEVERUS.

I Have bought lately, out of the money that fell to me by inheritance, a Corinthian statue. It is small indeed, but handsome, and done to the life, according to my judgement; which, though little in all things, in these sort of things is least: however, I pretend to understand this particular figure. It is naked; and the faults, if it has any, appear open to censure: the beauties too appear as openly to praise. It represents an old man standing upright. The bones, the muscles, the nerves, the veins, and the wrinkles, carry in them all the appearances of life. The few scattered hairs upon the head are falling off; the forehead is large, the face shriveled, the neck lean, the arms lank, the breasts flat, the belly contracted.

The back discovers the same signs of age as the fore part; and the brass itself, by the colour of it, bears all the marks of a true antique. In short, the whole is such a master-piece, as must attract the eye of the most knowing, but must absolutely captivate the unskilful; which induced me, novice as I am in these curiosities, to make the purchase. But I bought it not to adorn my own house, having as yet no Corinthians there, but to put up in one of the most remarkable places of our native soil, and in the temple of JUPITER, preferable to any other. It appears an offering worthy of the temple, worthy of the God. Do you, therefore, with whom my requests always find weight, undertake this piece of trouble, and order a pedestal to be made immediately, out of what marble you please, whereon may be contained my name, and my titles, if you think they ought to be added. I will send you the statue
by

by the first person, who will be troubled with the carriage of it; or, what you would rather chuse, I will bring it myself: for I intend to make an excursion to you, if the business of my post will give me leave. I see joy in your looks, when I promise to come; but you contract your countenance again, when I am forced to add, I can stay only some few days: for the same reasons, that hinder my coming sooner, will prevent my longer stay. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

HORACE describes a man, going mad after antient statues:

Insanit veteres statuas DAMASIPPUS emendo.

“ While antient statues DAMASIPPUS buys,
“ His reason he discards, to please his eyes.”

And the same eager love of antique statues prevailed in PLINY'S days, as is now prevalent among the *virtuosi*. The statue, here described, is of a very old man; and every part is so minutely specified, that we behold the figure of age before us. A melancholy prospect at best! To leave, therefore, a more agreeable idea upon the mind, the reader will accept of a copy of verses, written upon the pedestal of a modern DIANA.

I.

See, where DIANA'S radiant charms
In all their pow'r confess,
Reprove the eye her beauty warms,
And check each wishful breast.

2.

Well may the marble, taught by art,
Each forward hope controul;
For while her smiles attract the heart,
Her chastness wins the soul.

3. Her

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

3.

Her meek, and half averted eye,
 To each beholder tells,
 Virtue can passion's suit deny.
 And with her, virtue dwells.

4.

Yet while the Goddess I survey,
 I burn with fierce desire:
 What eyes can o'er such beauty stray?
 What heart resist the fire?

5.

To her I run with eager pace,
 And call her all my own;
 But, lifeless, to my warm embrace
 She proves a very stone.

6.

Oh! that PYGMALION'S fate were mine,
 And to indulge my flame,
 Some pitying god, with breath divine,
 Would animate the frame.

7.

My goddess though transform'd, might share
 The fame she had of old,
 Might shine to all like marble fair,
 To all, but me, as cold.

EPISTLE

E P I S T L E VII.

PLINY to CANINIUS RUFUS.

I Am just now told, that SILIUS ITALICUS has starved himself to death, at his country house near *Naples*. The cause was his ill health. He suffered so much by a cancerous humour, which was become absolutely incurable, that he grew weary of life, and hastened his own end, with a constancy not to be moved. He was blessed and happy to the last day of his life, except in the loss of the younger of his two sons: however, he has left the elder, the worthier man of the two, in a flourishing, and even in a consular state. He had sullied his character in the time of NERO: he was thought to have accused several persons officiously. But, under the favour of VITELLIUS, he behaved himself wisely, and with great humanity. He brought away with him a large share of glory from his Asiatic proconsulship, and expunged the blots of his former severity, by a most commendable retreat. He lived among the great men without power, and without envy. He was much respected, and much visited, out of regard to his person, not to his fortune, even though he often kept his bed, and was always confined to his chamber. Those days, which he did not employ in writing, he spent in learned conversation. He wrote verses, with more pains and exactness, than wit: and now and then, to try the opinion of mankind, he repeated some of his works in public. At length, he retired from *Rome*, his age prompting him to such a resolution, and settled himself in *Campania*; nor stirred from thence, even upon the accession of a new prince to the throne. The emperor deserves the highest applause, for giving such a liberty, and ITALICUS no less, for daring to use it. He was much taken

taken with all fine things ; in which he was more guided by appetite than judgement : and he underwent censurè accordingly. He had several villas in the same country, and neglected the old, as soon as he became enamoured of a new purchase. He had in each villa a great number of books, statues, and pictures ; and these he not only enjoyed, but adored. The statue of VIRGIL held the first place in his veneration. He celebrated the birth-day of that poet with greater solemnity than his own ; especially at *Naples*, where he visited VIRGIL'S tomb with the same reverence, as if it had been a temple. In this tranquil state of life he outlived his seventy fifth year, rather with a delicate, than an infirm constitution : and as he was the last consul made by NERO, so he died the last of all those consuls, whom NERO had made. It is also remarkable, that as he died the last of NERO'S consuls, so NERO died, when he was consul : a circumstance, which brings into my mind the transient state of human nature. For, alas ! what is so circumscribed, what is so short, as the longest life of man ? Does it not seem to you, as if NERO was alive but yesterday ? And yet, of all his consuls, there is not one remaining. But, why do I think this wonderful ? LUCIUS PISO, the father of that PISO, who was barbarously murdered by VALE-RIUS FESTUS in *Africa*, used to say, that he did not see any single man in the senate, whose opinion he had demanded when he was consul. Within such narrow limits are the lives of so great a multitude confined ! To me, therefore, the royal tears, shed upon a reflexion of this kind, seem not only pardonable, but worthy of praise ; for they say, that XERXES, upon a review of his immense army, wept to consider, that of such a number of men, in a very little time, not one would be living. But this ought to incite us to employ our time, fleeting and transitory as it is, if not in great actions, (for those may

may be destined to other hands,) yet certainly in study : and as it may not be permitted us to live long, let us leave something behind, to shew that we have lived. I know you want no admonitions : but my affection for you calls upon me to encourage you in your race, as you have usually encouraged me. Noble is the contention, when friends, by mutual exhortations, spirit up each other to the love of immortality. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

*part
part was
study*

PLINY, speaking of ITALICUS, says, *Fuit inter principes civitatis sine potentia, sine invidia. Salutabatur, colebatur, multumque in lectulo jacens, cubiculo semper, non ex fortuna frequentis* : “ He lived among the leading men of character, without power, and without envy. His person, not his fortune, attracted to him, confined as he was to his bed, many visits, and much respect.” Great endowments of the mind are apt to charm us into compassion, where, perhaps, we ought to shew abhorrence, or, at least, contempt. We forget the villain, and adore the man, who may be compared to the character of JUPITER, a mixture of power and vice. But, in truth, no abilities can make amends for treachery ; nor can the best head atone for a bad heart. PLINY, with his usual humanity, says all in defence of ITALICUS, that can be said ; nay, he even speaks diffidently of the base part he had acted ; *Credebatur sponte accusasse*. “ He was suspected to have been one of NERO’s spies : but during the reign of VITELLIUS, continues our author, and during his own proconsulship in *Asia*, he stood firm in a course of virtue ; and, at last, by a well-judged retreat, wiped off those stains, which his former misconduct had contracted.” PLINY is mistaken. No retreat can wipe off the stains of villainy. Virtue, like the ermin, will die, rather than receive a spot ; or, to consider her in the character of a deity, she expects a constant, uninterrupted sacrifice ; and shuts her temple for ever against those votaries, who forsake it but for a moment. However, the future behaviour and perseverance of ITALICUS might, perhaps, gain him a per-

* Vide TACITI Hist. lib. 3. cap. 65.

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

mission to stand within the shadow of the dome. There is no occasion to enter into any minute particulars of his character; it is sufficiently known. MARTIAL celebrates him often; and, in the forty ninth epigram of the eleventh book, tells us, that he had purchased TULLY'S villa at *Tusculum*¹. We find by PLINY, that he had various country seats, and was consequently rich. I am afraid he made his fortune under NERO; although it is certain, he was descended of a very noble and a very antient family. He was born in the reign of TIBERIUS, and died in his seventy sixth year, chusing death, as preferable to enduring the acute pain of a cancerous swelling; which, GALEN tells us, is called *clavus*, because it affects the patient with the same sensation of torment, as if a nail was fixed in the part.

¹ *Silius hæc magni celebrat monumenta Maronis
Jugosa facundi qui Ciceronis habet.
Hæredem, dominumque, sui tumulique, Larisque
Non alium mallet, nec Maro, nec Cicero.*

EPISTLE VIII.

PLINY to SÜETONIUS TRANQUILLUS.

YOU act agreeably to that regard, which you pay me in other instances, by so earnest a sollicitation, that I would transfer the military tribuneship, which I obtained for you from that excellent man, NERATIUS MARCELLUS, to your near relation, CÆSENIUS SILVANUS. Be assured, that as it would have been the greatest pleasure to me to see you a tribune, it will be no less satisfactory to me, to see another in that office by your means. For I cannot think it consistent, that, while I am endeavouring to raise any person to the highest honours, I should envy him a character above all honours, that of a faithful and affectionate relation. And since it is equally excellent to merit, and to confer benefits, I see you are resolved to lay claim to the praise of both, by giving to another what you have deserved yourself.

self. Besides, I am not ignorant of my own share of the glory, when it is once publicly known, that my friends are not only able to fill the office of military tribune, but even to give it: for which reason I most willingly obey your generous request. Nor is your name as yet upon the roll; and therefore we are at liberty to substitute SILVANUS in your place, who, I hope, will be no less pleased with the favours received from you, than you were with those received from me. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

A generous heart, like PLINY's, can never be happier than when employed in conferring favours. The power of doing good is the only part of royalty to be envied; and, were it not for that glorious and godlike prerogative, a man might as well wish to be a king, *to ride on a gate all day*, as for any other privileges, annexed to the crown. Nearest in power to the king is his favourite minister: he is the channel, through which the royal blessings are to flow; and PLINY was in that post of dignity, and danger, when he wrote this epistle. It is addressed to SÜETONIUS TRANQUILLUS, the historian, one of our author's principal friends; and whom he had named, some time before, to the office of military tribune; but now, at the request of SÜETONIUS, he makes a promise of that tribuneship to CÆSERNIUS SILVANUS. If we look back upon the character of TRANQUILLUS, given in the twenty fourth epistle of the first book, we shall find him delineated there as a philosopher, rather than a soldier. He had, indeed, begun the world by going into the army. He was tribune of the third legion under OTHO; but, tired probably of that life, he endeavours, we see, in the reign of TRAJAN, to whom he was afterwards secretary, to withdraw from the command, to which he had been nominated, and to place his relation SILVANUS in his room.

There is, I confess, some degree of vanity in this epistle; a vanity, which is frequently inseparable from a love of power: for such is the frailty of human nature, that we are not content with knowing we have power, unless others know it also.

EPISTLE IX.

PLINY to MINUTIANUS:

I Can now give you a full account of the labour and pains, which I have taken in the public cause of the province of *Andalusia*: for it consisted of many parts, and was frequently pleaded in various methods. Whence this variety? whence so many different pleadings? CÆCILIUS CLASSICUS, a base, and notoriously wicked man, behaved himself as violently and vilely, during his proconsulship in *Andalusia*, as MARIUS PRISCUS did, the same year, in *Africa*. But PRISCUS was born in *Andalusia*, and CLASSICUS in *Africa*; from whence the *Andalusians*, (for even grief sometimes makes men witty,) vented a stinging reflexion: "I have given one evil, and I have received another." But MARIUS was accused only by one particular city, and by many private persons: CLASSICUS was prosecuted by the weight of a whole province. He prevented the consequences of that prosecution by a sudden, or a voluntary death. His end was dishonourable, and yet doubtful: for as it seemed likely, that he was willing to die, from a consciousness of not being able to withstand the accusation; so was it wonderful, that he, who could die, to avoid the shame of being condemned, was not ashamed to commit those crimes, that deserved condemnation. Nevertheless, the *Andalusians* persisted in their prosecution of him after his death. This had been established and provided for by laws, grown obsolete and out of use, but now, after a long interval of time, restored to their former force and power. The *Andalusians* added an accusation against the ministers of CLASSICUS, and of all those, who were supposed to be accomplices in his crimes; and demanded a particular enquiry into the conduct of each person by name. I was advocate for the *Andalusians*,

lusians, and LUCEIUS ALBINUS was joined with me; a man copious and florid in his diction, whom though I loved, and was mutually beloved by him before, yet now my affection for him was increased by reason of our joint office. The thirst of glory, especially in performances of this kind, has generally something in it extremely unfociable; but between us there was no division, no contention; since we both drew equally in the same yoke, not for ourselves, but for the cause: and it seemed to be for the advantage of a cause of so great consequence, that we should not undertake too much labour in every pleading, but relieve and assist each other, by taking different parts. We feared, that neither the day, nor our voices, nor our lungs were sufficient for the work, if we should prosecute so many crimes, and so many impeached persons, and comprize them all, as it were, in one body. Then again, the minds and attention of the judges would not only be tired, but confounded by so many different names and arguments. We apprehended too, that the interest and reputation of each of the accused, when heaped up and blended together, might procure to each individual the whole weight and influence of them all. Lastly, we imagined, that the most powerful might escape, at the expence of others, by giving up the meanest and most contemptible to justice, as an atonement for the rest: for favour and interest are then most powerful, when they can screen themselves under some specious pretence of severity. We remembered the example of SERTORIUS, who commanded the strongest and weakest of his soldiers to pull off the tail of a horse^m. You know the rest. We concluded, in the same manner, that the whole number of the persons accused might at last be con-

^m This story is told at full length by PLUTARCH, in his life of SERTORIUS; and is alluded to by HORACE, in his famous epistle to AUGUSTUS.

victed, by carrying on their prosecutions separately. We determined first to shew, that CLASSICUS was guilty. This was the fittest step to take, in order to come at his associates and ministers; because they could not be convicted, unless he was guilty. Out of the tribe we selected two, BÆBIUS PROBUS and FABIVS HISPANUS, whom we added, and joined in the accusation of CLASSICUS. They were both men of great interest, and HISPANUS particularly remarkable for eloquence. The trouble about CLASSICUS was short and easy. He had left a writing under his hand, giving an account of what, and how much he had taken, from whence, and for what reasons. He had likewise sent a boasting, impudent letter to Rome, to a certain little mistress, whom he kept there, in these very words: "Rejoice! rejoice! I come to you a great man: I have disposed of so much of the property of the *Andalusians*, as amounts to four thousand great sesterces." We had much more difficulty with HISPANUS and PROBUS. Before I attempted to enter upon a detail of their crimes, I thought it necessary to prove, that the execution of an unjust sentence was in itself highly criminal. If I had not taken this method, it would have been in vain to have proved them the ministers of CLASSICUS in his villainies: for, in their defence, they did not deny the facts charged on them, but pleaded the necessity they were under to obey their master, and therefore humbly prayed for pardon: they urged, moreover, that they were provincials, and therefore were obliged, through fear, to comply with all the commands of the proconsul. CLAUDIUS RESTITUTUS, who answered me, (an experienced and vigilant advocate) although perfectly ready at replying to sudden charges or objections, has since often said, that he was never more perplexed and confounded, than

* Which amount, in our money, to 32,358 l. 9 s. 2 d. . . .

when

when he perceived, that the chief arguments, which he had prepared for his defence, and in which he had placed all his confidence, were defeated before he had an opportunity to make use of them. Our conduct had this issue. The senate decreed, that the effects of CLASSICUS, before he was proconsul, should be separated from the rest, and should be given to his daughter; and that the remainder should be left for those, who had been robbed and pillaged by him: and they added, that the money, which he had paid his creditors; should be repaid. HISPANUS and PROBUS were banished for five years. So wicked, in the end, did their actions appear, which the senate, in the beginning of the trial, thought hardly criminal. Some few days after, we accused CLAVIUS FUSCUS, the son-in-law of CLASSICUS, and STILLONIUS PRISCUS, who had been tribune of a cohort under CLASSICUS, with different success. PRISCUS was banished *Italy* for two years, FUSCUS was acquitted. We thought it most convenient to join many in our third charge, lest, if this enquiry was drawn into a greater length; the justice and severity of the judges might lessen by the satiety and tediousness of the accusations. Besides, the criminals, who remained, designedly reserved for trial to this time, were persons of no great consequence; except the wife of CLASSICUS, against whom, although there were strong suspicions, yet there was not sufficient proof to convict her. As for the daughter of CLASSICUS, who was amongst the accused, there was no ground even of suspicion against her: therefore, when I came to mention her name in this last prosecution (for we did not, towards the latter end, fear, as in the beginning, that the force of the whole accusation would be lessened by this joint proceeding) I thought it dishonourable to urge any thing hard against a person, who appeared to be innocent; and upon this occasion I spoke my thoughts freely, and variously: for I not only asked

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the ° ambaffadors : “ whether they had informed me
 “ of any thing, which they believed might be prov-
 “ ed againft her ;” but I alfo begged advice of the
 fenate, “ whether they thought, that if I had any
 “ power in eloquence, I ought to ufe it like a fword
 “ againft the throat of an innocent perfon :” and
 then I concluded with thefe words, “ Somebody may
 “ fay, Do you pretend to be a judge ?” “ No, I
 “ do not pretend to be a judge ; but I muft remem-
 “ ber, that I was appointed advocate from among
 “ the judges.” Thus ended a caufe, in which fo
 many were engaged. Some were acquitted, more
 were condemned, and banifhed ; fome only for a
 time, others for ever. Our induftry, our integrity,
 and our conftancy were unanimoſly approved by the
 ſame decree of the fenate : the worthy and only
 equal reward to fo great labour. You may eaſily
 conceive how much we were fatigued, who were
 obliged to plead fo often, to difpute fo often, to ex-
 amine fo many witneſſes, to aſſiſt ſome, and to con-
 fute others, How difficult, how troubleſome was
 it to us to reſiſt the private interceſſions of the friends
 of the accuſed, and to bear up againft thoſe who
 publicly oppoſed us ! I ſhall mention one of the
 many things I ſaid upon the occaſion. When ſome
 of the very judges interrupted me, in behalf of one
 of the accuſed, who was moſt in their favour ; I
 answered, “ If this man be really innocent, he will
 “ not be leſs ſo, when I have ſaid all I have to ſay.”
 From hence you will conjecture, how great ſtruggles,
 and even animoſities, we laboured under : but this
 laſted a ſhort time only ; for that integrity, which
 for the preſent offends thoſe whom it oppoſes, is
 ſoon after admired and applauded by the ſame per-
 ſons. I could not inform you more fully of this af-

° The deputies from *Andaluſia* to ſolicit the caufe. See Ep. iv.
 of this book.

fair. You will say, it was not of such mighty consequence; for what have I to do with such a long epistle? do not enquire then what is doing at *Rome*: and yet remember, that the epistle cannot be long, which comprehends the business of so many days, and gives an account of so many hearings, such a number of criminals, and the various events of this process; all which, I think, I have described both concisely and carefully. I have been rash in saying carefully; for something occurs, which I had forgot, and indeed it is now a little late; but though it comes in awkwardly, you shall hear it. *HOMER* does the same thing, and many follow his example; which, upon some occasions, is very ornamental. However, that is not my reason for mentioning it thus.

One of the witnesses, whether provoked, that he had been forced to appear against his will, or whether suborned by any of the persons arraigned, with intent to lessen the force of the accusation, openly charged *NORBANUS LICINIANUS*, one of the deputies of the province, and a solicitor in this cause, with prevarication in what related to *CASTA*, the wife of *CLASSICUS*. It is a maxim in law, that the principal cause be first finished, before an enquiry be made into the prevarication; because we can form a better judgement of the prevarication, after having observed in what manner the cause has been prosecuted. But, in the case of *NORBANUS*, neither the rule of law, nor the character of ambassador, nor the office of solicitor were of service to him; such high resentments had he drawn upon himself. He was indeed a most wicked man, and had done as much mischief, in the reign of *DOMITIAN*, as many others; and he had been, at this time, elected by the province as one of their deputies to prosecute this cause, not as a good and faithful representative, but only as an enemy to *CLASSICUS*, by whom he had been

been banished. He desired a day might be allotted him, to answer the crimes alledged against him. He was refused, and obliged to answer instantly. He answered: his evil and depraved turn of mind makes me doubt, whether I shall say he defended himself impudently or resolutely; but certainly he did it with great readiness. Many things were thrown out against him, which hurt him more than the charge of prevarication: for two consular men, POMPONIUS RUFUS and LIBO FRUGI, testified, that, in the reign of DOMITIAN, he had assisted the accusers of SALVIUS LIBERALIS, before the judge. He was condemned, and banished the continent. Therefore, when I accused CASTA, I offered nothing more, than that her accuser was convicted of prevarication. But I offered this in vain: for a new and illegal thing happened, that the accused person should be acquitted, her accuser being convicted of prevarication. Do you ask, what was our conduct while these things were transacting? We acquainted the senate, that we had received our whole information of this public cause from NORBANUS, and we ought to enquire into this matter anew, if he was proved a prevaricator. But while he was upon his trial, we sat down: NORBANUS was afterwards present every day of the trials, and shewed the same resolution, or impudence, to the last. But now let me ask myself again, if I have omitted any thing: yes truly; I had like to have been guilty of a very great omission. SALVIUS LIBERALIS, on the last day, charged the rest of the ambassadors, that they had not accused all, whom their province had ordered to be accused: and as he is impetuous and eloquent, he brought them into danger. I protected those excellent, and, I may add, most grateful men. They declare, they were wholly obliged to me for their deliverance from that storm. This shall be the end of my epistle; in truth; the end. I will not add a syllable more, though

though I should still find I had omitted something.
Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This epistle is inexcusably misplaced. If sense and order had been consulted, it ought to have been put before the fourth epistle of this book; because that letter was occasioned by transactions specified here, and was not addressed to MACRINUS till the trial of CLASSICUS was over; in which PLINY had complied with the request of the *Andalusians*, in appearing as their advocate and patron.

To waive all encomiums upon the behaviour of PLINY, which naturally arise when this epistle is perused, let us look into the subject matter of the letter itself.

It appears, that the crimes both of MARIUS PRISCUS, and of CÆCILIUS CLASSICUS, were committed in one and the same year. PRISCUS was tried in the reign of DOMITIAN; and this letter gives us to understand, that CLASSICUS and his adherents did not undergo their trial till after DOMITIAN'S death. It may be asked then, what occasions the difference in point of time? The most probable reason seems to be, that the *Andalusians* waited to see the issue of the complaint against MARIUS; and not finding his punishment equal to his guilt, or consonant to justice, they despaired of success against CLASSICUS, and therefore deferred their proceedings, in hopes of some future equitable reign.

In these trials, we may perceive the different influence, which the two emperors, DOMITIAN and TRAJAN, had over the senate. Under the tyranny of the first, the laws were not put in execution against PRISCUS; under the golden age of the latter, CLASSICUS and his abettors were punished in the amplest manner, and according to law; although I confess, the manner of proceeding against NORBANUS LICINIANUS was very singular. His accusation was sudden, and verbal only; and he was obliged to answer forthwith; nor was either his trial or condemnation deferred. But PLINY says, *Objecta sunt multa, quæ magis quàm prævaricatio nocuerunt*: "Many crimes, which were objected, to him, hurt him more than his prevarication." If the objections had been specified, perhaps they would have accounted for these hasty proceedings: at present we can only
suppose,

suppose, that the senate acted on the foundation of reason and justice.

Nilominus BÆTICA etiam in defuncti accusatione perstabat. Provisum hoc legibus, intermissum tamen, et post longam intercapedinem tunc reductum: “Nevertheless, BÆTICA still persisted in the accusation of the deceased. This practice was according to the laws of the empire, although, by long disuse, it had been intermitted, and was now restored after that intermission.” There were two sorts of crimes, of a public nature, for which the criminals were prosecuted, even after death. One was high treason, of which those were guilty, who, to prevent condemnation, killed themselves. The other was extortion, called by the Romans, *repetundæ*. This last was the crime of CLASSICUS; and, by the revival of a law grown almost obsolete, an action was brought against his heirs, in the manner here mentioned. As the death of CLASSICUS was not without suspicion of suicide, *mors ejus infamis; ambigud tamen:* “His death, although the manner of it was uncertain, carried with it the appearance of infamy:” there was the more reason for reviving this obsolete law. But with us, neither any criminal prosecution, nor any forfeiture is legal after death. The final decree, in regard to the chief offender, CÆCILIVS CLASSICUS, is extremely equitable, and becoming the senate of Rome. “His effects, which he had in possession before he was proconsul, were to be given to his daughter; and all the rest of his possessions, not only what he had unjustly acquired, but also what he had accumulated by the rights and income of his office, were to be allotted to that nation, which he had robbed.” For since he had been so exorbitant a plunderer in his proconsulship, it was certainly right, that his family should not enjoy the profits of his plunder.

There is an obscurity in the remaining part of the decree: *Ut pecuniæ, quas creditoribus solverat, revocarentur:* “That the sums, which he had paid his creditors, should be recalled.” By whom was this money to be paid, by the creditors, or by the daughter? The creditors had done no wrong; they were not allied to him, nor were they before the court; and therefore ought not to be bound by any sentence given by the court. The meaning and purport of the decree seems to have been, “that the money, he had paid his creditors, should be deducted, and taken out of
“ that

“ that part of his effects, which had belonged to him before he was proconsul.” Such a determination is agreeable to the first part of the sentence, and founded upon the same reason, “ that all his gains during his proconsulship should be forfeited to the use of the injured ; and that his debts should be paid out of what was his own before that time.”

Although *PLINY* is universally allowed to be a polite author, and although there are many epistles more entertaining than this ; yet whenever any of his letters treat of the Roman senate, and of the proceedings there, they give a dignity and weight to his writings, that place him among the historical writers of his time. He is not only the gentleman, but the statesman ; and whilst some of his familiar epistles convey to us the wit and elegance of literature and friendship ; others, like this, give us an insight into the customs, laws, and constitution of the people and senate of *Rome*.

E P I S T L E X.

PLINY to SPURINNA, and COCCIA the wife of SPURINNA.

WHEN I paid my last visit to you, I did not mention, that I had composed some verses in honour of your son. My chief design in writing them was to satisfy my affection and my grief, not to talk of my performance. Besides, *SPURINNA*, when you heard, that I had publicly repeated a poem, as you yourself informed me, I imagined you knew upon what subject it was. Again, I was apprehensive, by reviving your remembrance of that heavy load of sorrow, I should break in upon a time destined to festivity : and even now, I have hesitated a little, whether I should gratify *COCCIA* and you in your request, by sending those verses only, I recited ; or whether I should add those, which I intended to preserve for an additional volume. A single volume, especially when so very small, cannot possibly

possibly contain the entire affection, which I bear to the dear and ever honoured memory of a man, whose fame will be the more amply established, by placing his actions in a just and proper light. However, notwithstanding my hesitations, whether I ought to send you all my compositions, or whether I should retain part of them in my own custody; it seems most agreeable to my character, and to the friendship I profess for you, to send you all, especially as I have your promise, that they shall not be communicated to any other person, till I make them public. The only remaining favour I ask is, that you would use the same frankness with me, in pointing out those passages, which you may think ought to be enlarged, altered, or omitted. Nevertheless, I confess, I find it difficult to fix my attention on this melancholy subject; and, without doubt, the same difficulty must affect you both: but as you would direct a statuary, or a painter, what features to express, and what lines to retouch, in the representation of your son; so you must model and guide me, who am endeavouring to give an image of him, that will neither be brittle, nor subject to decay; but will last, as you think, to all eternity: and the truer this image, the better; the freer from faults, and the more elegantly finished, the more durable it will remain. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This epistle to COCCIA and SPURINNA ought to have been placed immediately after the first epistle of this book, in which we have seen the life and character of VESTRICIUS SPURINNA, and in which COCCIA is spoken of as a woman *singularis exempli*, "of uncommon virtues;" the wife, the companion, and the friend of SPURINNA. The first epistle of this book ought to have succeeded the seventh of the second book; where, we may remember, the character of COTTIUS is illustrated, and his death mentioned

to

to have happened during his father SPURINNA'S absence in Germany. Human nature knows no greater loss than the death of a valuable child. Among the thunderbolts of heaven's wrath, this is the most to be dreaded, the hardest to be sustained. A wretch in danger of drowning, whose single twig of hope and support breaks, and lets him sink for ever, is happy, in comparison of the parent, who loses an only son. The verses, which PLINY made on this occasion, were undoubtedly very pathetic; but as time hath robbed us of the treasure, let us turn our thoughts from so melancholy a theme.

E P I S T L E XI.

PLINY to JULIUS GENITOR.

OUR friend ARTEMIDORUS has so much benignity of nature, that he always exaggerates the favours he receives. It is from that temper you have heard him speak of the obligations, which, it is true, he lies under to me, in a manner far beyond any merit, to which I can pretend. When the philosophers were all banished from the city, I went to visit him, at a house he had in the suburbs; and as I was then prætor, such a visit was more taken notice of, and consequently more dangerous. He had occasion for a large sum of money to pay his debts, all which he had contracted much to his honour: some of his greatest and richest friends only hesitated, but offered him no assistance. I borrowed the money, and made him a present of it; and I did this at a time, when seven of my friends were either put to death, or banished. SENECIO, RUSTICUS, and HELVIDIUS, were the three who were put to death. MAURICUS, GRATILLA, ARRIA, and FANNIA were banished. Scorched, in a manner, by so many thunderbolts bursting around me, I might have prognosticated from such certain omens, that the same fate was impending over me: but I cannot think, I have therefore

fore deserved that large share of glory, which ARTEMIDORUS bestows upon me : it can only be said, that I avoided the reproach of deserting my friend. I loved and admired C. MUSONIUS, his father-in-law, as much as the difference of our years would permit ; and my intimate familiarity with ARTEMIDORUS himself began when I was a military tribune in Syria. That was the first specimen I gave of a right disposition, in tasting and admiring a person, who was either a wise man in reality, or approached the nearest to that character : for of all those, who now call themselves philosophers, you will scarce find any one of them equal to him in sincerity and integrity. I omit his patience in undergoing the extremities of heat and cold ; his bearing up against all fatigue ; his moderation in eating and drinking, without the least indulgence to pleasure ; and the strict bounds, within which he confines his appetites and desires. In another man, these would appear great virtues ; in him they are lost in greater. For which reason, MUSONIUS chose him for a son-in-law, preferable to all his rivals, of what quality soever. When I reflect upon his character, I own it is a pleasure to me that he is so lavish of my praise to all his acquaintance, and especially to you. However, to end as I began, I am afraid, that, hurried away by his good-nature, he exceeds all bounds in his encomiums. For in this particular, he, who is otherwise a man of the most consummate prudence, is frequently mistaken. I confess it a glorious error, in entertaining a better opinion of his friends than they deserve. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

There are some passages in this epistle, which require an explanation.

Equidem quum essent philosophi ab urbe summoti, sui apud illum in suburbano : " When the philosophers were excluded
" the

“ the city, I went to wait upon him in the suburbs.” We might imagine from hence, that the philosophers were only banished the limits of the city ; and that ARTEMIDORUS had taken a house in the suburbs, or in some place without the city walls : but GELLIUS tells us, that they were banished not only out of *Rome*, but out of *Italy*. *Philosophi etiam, DOMITIANO imperante, senatus consulto ejeti, atque urbe et Italia interdicti sunt. Quâ tempestate EPICETUS quoque philosophus, propter id senatus consultum, Nicopolin Româ decessit* ^a : “ The philosophers too, in the reign of DOMITIAN, were expelled by a decree of the senate : and their return, either to *Rome*, or *Italy*, was prohibited. “ On the occasion of that decree EPICETUS, the philosopher, left *Rome*, and settled at *Nicopolis*.” When the decree of the senate was published against the philosophers, PLINY, though at that time *prætor*, went openly to visit ARTEMIDORUS, whose house was situated in the suburbs of *Rome* ; a situation more agreeable than the city, for the convenience of study and speculation : and therefore I am apt to think, that VIRGIL, who had the utmost abhorrence of crowds, and an equal love of retirement, has by representing the house of ANCHISES in *Troy*, given us a description of his own house in *Rome* ;

secreta parentis

ANCHISÆ domus, arboribusque obtecta recessit ^b.

“ My fire ANCHISES’ house secluded stood,
“ Hid by the friendly umbrage of a wood.”

But to return to PLINY.

Pecuniam etiam, quâ tunc illi ampliore opus erat, ut æs alienum exsolveret, contractum ex pulcherrimis causis, mussantibus magnis quibusdam et locupletibus amicis, mutuatus ipse, gratuitam dedi : “ I sent him the money voluntarily, he wanting “ a more than ordinary supply to pay his debts ; all which “ were contracted from the most generous principles ; his “ richest and greatest friends offering him no assistance on “ the occasion.” This was a noble piece of generosity in PLINY, and was following the example of ARTEMIDORUS, borrowing money *ex pulcherrimis causis*.

^a A. GELLIUS, lib. 15. cap. 11.

^b Æneid. ii. v. 299.

Non ideo tamen eximiam gloriam meruisse me, ut ille prædicat, credo; sed tantum effugisse flagitium: “I cannot assume, or think I deserve glory, as he asserts, from that circumstance. It would have been a reproach to have acted otherwise.” Can there be a more manifest example of humility? PLINY had done one of the greatest and most glorious actions, that human nature is capable of; and yet he puts no higher construction upon it, than that he had acted, as any man must act, who chose not to be remarkable for having deserted his friend. I wonder those authors, who have endeavoured to prove PLINY a Christian, did not collect their proofs from sentences in his writings, agreeable to the precepts of Christianity. This is one; and seems in absolute submission to the commands of our Saviour, where he says, *when ye shall have done all those things, which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that, which it was our duty to do*^c. At least, if it does not amount to a proof of PLINY's Christianity, it certainly proves the excellence of the religion itself; since a man cannot proceed upon maxims of generosity, humility, or any other virtue, without acting in consistence and obedience to the laws of CHRIST.

Sunt hæc magna, sed in alio; in hac verò minima, si ceteris virtutibus comparentur: “These, in another person, would be great merits, but in him, taking and comparing all his virtues together, they are amongst the least of hisfections.” Here is room left to believe, that ARTEMIDORUS had every virtue under heaven: and indeed few authors, if any, have equalled PLINY in representing their friends in so generous a manner, as not to touch upon those human weaknesses and failings, which, when mentioned, though ever so slightly, are apt to obscure the most shining characters, and to sully the bright ideas we might otherwise have of the persons delineated. Irreparable injuries are committed by the dreadful monosyllable, *But*: that single word, placed maliciously, pulls down more, in one moment, than volumes can ever repair. The characters, transmitted to us by PLINY, are drawn with judgement, politeness, honesty, and truth. They appear not with all the solemnity of history, because they are interspersed in familiar letters; but the dignity of the subject is not lessened by the title of the work. And let it be observed, to the honour of

^c LUKE xvii. 10.

our author, that, where he is obliged to describe a bad man, he gives *so* many and such glaring instances of his knavery, as prove the person delineated, beyond all contradiction, wicked and detestable : but where he paints a good man, like ARTEMIDORUS, he dwells upon his beauties, and takes pleasure in enumerating his virtues : nor content to stop there, he frequently looks back into the characters of his friends and relations ; and where he cannot prove him virtuous by parentage and descent, he endeavours to prove him so by alliance. So that his epistles may be justly esteemed the letters of a noble Roman, who was an honour to his friends, and whose friends were an honour to the commonwealth.

E P I S T L E XII.

PLINY to CATILIUS SEVERUS.

YES, I will sup with you, but upon these conditions : let our supper be short and frugal ; let our discourse, like the conversation of SOCRATES, abound with morality ; but even in that let us shew moderation. You know, that before morning a great deal of business is to be done, which even CATO himself could not be excused for breaking in upon ; CATO, whom CÆSAR blames in such a manner, as redounds to his praise. For he tells us, that the persons, who met him drunk, blushed at the discovery ; “ and from thence you would have thought, says CÆSAR, “ that CATO had met them in liquor, not “ that they had found him so.” Could the character of CATO rise higher, than to render him venerable, when thus disguised ? But, let our supper be as moderate in regard to the time of parting, as in the preparation and expence : for we are not arrived to so great a height in character, that our enemies cannot censure us, without saying something, at the same time, in our praise. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

There is no farther use in such epistles as this, than to let us into the turn and manner of our author's life. The particular letter now before us displays an instance of his temperance and morality: for he orders the supper to be plain and frugal; and at the same time desires, that their discourse may turn upon moral subjects, such as would become, or entertain SOCRATES. All moral men are wise men: for when the rules of decency or order are once infringed, no body can tell where the confusion will end. Immorality and rudeness may accidentally promote laughter; but it is a burst, which is only heard, and immediately forgotten; like mountain rivers, that sometimes overflow their banks, and make a considerable noise and inundation for a few hours, but soon retract their triumph, and return to a small trifling stream. On the other hand, regularity and politeness supply a perpetual spring of cheerfulness and good humour, which flow on in one even tide, to the great beauty and improvement of every country, through which they pass.

Erunt officia antelucana, in quæ incidere impunitè ne CATONI quidem licuit. This sentence is a little difficult: the meaning is this: "Let us part early, that we may rise early. In winter, our various avocations force us up before day. There is a good deal of business always to be done before sun-rise. Therefore, let us not be seen returning home, when our neighbours are going out; not reeling sottishly to our own beds, when other people have soberly left theirs. CATO himself could not be justified in such a debauch: and we are not arrived to the character of those men, whom their enemies cannot condemn, without commending at the same time^d."

^d See CLARENDON'S History; the character of OLIVER CROMWELL.

E P I S T L E XII.

PLINY *to* VOCONIUS ROMANUS.

ACCORDING to your commands I have sent the book^c, in which I expressed, when lately consul, the gratitude of the public to the best of princes. I should have sent it, though you had not commanded me. I intreat you to consider at once the beauty and the difficulty of the theme. In other works, the novelty attracts the attention of the reader; but in this, where every thing, that can be said, has been often said before, the path is beaten, and the road is common; and for that reason, a reader, being quite at leisure, and perfectly regardless of the subject matter, turns all his observations upon the style alone; which, when considered singly, is extremely difficult to be wrought up in such a manner, as to give entire satisfaction. I could wish indeed, that the methodical disposition, the transitions, and the figures, might be criticised together: for in men of little learning, we sometimes discover both invention and eloquence; but none, except the learned, can distribute their materials properly, or place figures justly, in their various attitudes. Nor is the lofty and sublime to be perpetually affected on these occasions; for as nothing sets off the light of a picture better than shade; so in an oration, it sometimes is as necessary to bring it down to the common level, as to raise it above that level. But why all this to a man of letters? I should rather desire to know, what parts you think ought to be corrected; for if I find you so frank, as to make objections to particular passages, I shall take it for granted, that you are pleased with all the rest. Farewell.

^c PLINY'S PANEGYRIC ON TRAJAN.

OBSERVATIONS.

PLINY'S panegyric upon TRAJAN, which he sends with this epistle to his friend VOCONIUS ROMANUS, has been the store-house, from whence courtly authors have usually drawn the incense of their devotion. Whether the emperor TRAJAN deserved those high encomiums, which our author, in the abundant flow and strength of eloquence, has bestowed upon him, will admit perhaps of some doubt and suspicion: but the panegyric is in itself as high finished a picture of an amiable, generous, and brave prince, as has been ever exposed to view: and happy are the people, whose sovereign comes nearest in resemblance to so beautiful a portrait.

EPISTLE XIV.

PLINY to ACILIUS.

THE barbarous manner, in which LARGIUS MACEDO, a man of prætorian order, has been treated by his servants, deserves a place rather in public history, than in a private letter. He was, indeed, a proud and savage master; and he little remembered, or rather utterly forgot, that his father had been a servant.

He was bathing at his house near *Formie*: on a sudden his slaves surround him; one seizes his throat, another strikes him in the mouth, another beats him on the breast and belly, others bruise him in those parts, which modesty forbids to mention. When they thought he was expired, they threw him upon a hot pavement, to try if he had any signs of life. He, whether really without any sense of feeling, or whether he only pretended not to have any, remained stretched out at full length, and motionless: and by these means he was looked upon to be absolutely dead. At last they carried

carried him out, as if suffocated by the heat of the bath : then his more faithful servants received him, and his mistresses came shrieking and crying about him. Roused, in this manner, by their voices, and refreshed by the coolness of the place, he opens his eyes, and moves his body, and confesses, for it was now safe to own, that he was alive. His slaves immediately run away : many of them are already taken ; there is a strict search after the rest. But MACEDO, after being kept alive by art some days, is since dead, not without the comfort of finding himself as amply revenged in his life-time, as he would have been after his death.

You see, to what dangers, to what affronts, to what insults we are exposed : nor will humanity or mildness be the least protection to us ; for it is villainy, not judgement, that guides the murderers. But enough of these comments. What other news is stirring ? What ? none ; or I should certainly subjoin it : there is paper enough left ; and as this is a festival, I have leisure to insert as much more as I please. Let me add however, what just now occurs to me, of the same MACEDO, when he was in the public baths of *Rome*. The thing was notorious, and by the event proved ominous.

A Roman knight was gently tapped upon the shoulder by one of MACEDO's servants, that he might make way for his master : the knight turned himself about, and without striking the servant, who had touched him, hit MACEDO such a violent blow with his hand, that he almost knocked him down. Thus, the bath has been gradually fatal to him ; first, it was the scene of his disgrace, and afterwards, of his death. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

Many sentences in this epistle seem to require an explanation.

Rem atrocem nec tantum epistolâ dignam : " I think, says PLINY, " so black a piece of villainy is of too great consequence, not to be publickly known. It ought not to be confined to the narrow limits of a private letter ; the whole world should be apprized of it."

LARGIUS MACEDO, *superbus dominus et sævus, qui servisse patrem suum parùm, immo minimum meminisset* : " LARGIUS MACEDO was a proud and cruel master, who but little recollected, or cared to remind himself, that his father had been a servant." If the father of MACEDO had been a servant, it is no wonder MACEDO was a cruel master. Whenever a man rises too suddenly, from servitude and dependance, into a station of dignity and power, neither he, nor his nearest successors, can immediately quit that baseness of mind, which accompanies a low birth and education. The filth still remains, and clogs every action of their lives. They may be profuse, but they cannot be generous : they may be rich, but they cannot be great. Original nature will break through all bounds, and will discover itself, in spite of all constraints. A cat, says the fable, was once changed into a woman ; but as soon as a mouse appeared, she forgot her metamorphosis, and shewed herself an arrant cat. What is baser, what more inhuman, than to oppress servants and slaves, miserable by their situation, and only to be made less so, by that proper indulgence, which is due to the meanest of our fellow-creatures, and which will be always allowed them by those, who spring from the seeds of virtue, and who scorn to wear honours they have not deserved ? When we behold a barbarous master, and an ill-natured lord, it is no unjust presumption, notwithstanding his load of titles, to conclude, that by some accident or another he certainly sprouts from the refuse of the people, and the dregs of mankind.

Abjiciunt in fervens pavimentum : " They throw him down upon the floor of the *calidarium*" which was heated from below by the *hypocaustum*, and was answerable to the sweating-room in our bagnios. This particular chamber

ber is taken notice of, among the other apartments of the *balnea*, in the essay on PLINY's life.

Ipse paucis diebus ægrè facillatus, non sine ultionis solatio, decessit; ita vivus vindicatus, ut occisi solent: "He, having been kept alive for some few days, died at last with the satisfactory prospect of being revenged; and lived long enough to see the same methods of justice pursued, which are executed upon murderers." Although PLINY does not explain himself in this place, by telling us, in what manner the cruelties exercised upon MACEDO were revenged; yet it is easily to be deduced, notwithstanding some obscurity in the sentence, that, during the small space of time he survived, those slaves, who were taken, were punished as they deserved, and in the same manner, as if he had been actually dead. Perhaps the whole family of slaves were executed on this occasion; for TACITUS^f tells us, that by the old Roman laws, when a slave had killed his master, the intire tribe of domestic slaves were to suffer for the murder, as amply as if every individual had been guilty of it. The same historian^g, in a preceding book, says, *Factum et senatus consultum ultioni juxta et securitati, ut si quis a suis servis interfectus esset, ii quoque, qui testamento manumissi sub eodem testamento mansissent, inter servos supplicia penderent:* "That by decree of the senate, when a master was killed by his slaves, the freedmen, who were made free by his last will, if they were in the same house, should suffer equally with the slaves." But this law was thought too rigorous to be put in execution.

Nec est, quòd quisquam possit esse securus, quia sit remissus et mitis: "Nor will gentleness and indulgence secure our lives." If this reflexion is true, as I am afraid it is, how corrupted and debased are our inclinations! and how low and despicable is human nature! not to be won by kindnesses, not to be civilized by obligations! Brutes are tame and gentle to their feeders, faithful and submissive to their masters. Treachery to friends, and rebellion to benefactors, are to be found only among mankind.

^f TACIT. Annal. lib. 14. cap. 42. The passage is extremely remarkable, and contains a particular account, too long to be inserted here, of a popular insurrection, which arose from putting the laws in execution, *anno urbis 814.*

^g Annal. lib. 13. cap. 32. *anno urbis 810.*

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

Non enim iudicio domini, sed scelere, perimuntur. This sentence is a little obscure. "Masters are not murdered" from judgement, but from wickedness." All murders are committed from wickedness: what then is a murder from judgement? The meaning must be; slaves make no distinction between the best and the worst masters: the murders they are guilty of proceed more from the thirst of blood, and the savageness of their tempers, than from a proper spirit of indignation, or the foundation of a just revenge.

EPISTLE XV.

PLINY to SILIUS PROCULUS.

YOU desire me, at my leisure, to read over your poems, and to examine, whether they are worthy of being published. You earnestly beg this of me; you quote authorities for it; and you ask me to subtract some spare time from my own studies, to bestow it upon yours. You farther add, that TULLY himself, from a most admirable sweetness of nature, cherished the rising geniuses in poetry. But as to me, I need neither to be asked, nor to be entreated; because I have a most devout veneration for poetry, and the highest regard for you. I will obey your request, therefore, with as much assiduity as pleasure. But I think, I may even now venture to write you word, that your work is excellent, and ought by no means to be suppressed; as far as I am able to judge from those pieces, which you have rehearsed in my presence, unless your manner of repeating them imposed upon me; for, indeed, your manner is sweet and masterly. But, I trust, I am not so led away by the sense of hearing, that my judgement is weakened by the harmony that affects my ears. The edge of it may perhaps be a little turned and blunted by that means; but cannot be absolutely subverted or abolished. When I praise the poem in general, therefore, I do not speak rashly; but to judge of the several parts,

parts, I must read them all carefully over. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

TULLY'S attempts in poetry are for ever recorded by that memorable verse,

O fortunatum, natam me consule, Romam!^b

which Mr. DRYDEN has humorously translated,

“*Fortune foretun'd the dying notes of Rome,
“Till I, thy consul sale, consol'd thy doom!*”

But although that great orator was no poet himself, he cherished and admired the professors of that art. *Mirâ benignitate poetarum ingenia fovebat*: a part of his character by no means the least worthy of praise. PLINY seems desirous to imitate TULLY by a most generous encouragement of PROCULUS; whose poems, I believe, are no where known or spoken of, except in this epistle.

^b JUVENAL, Sat. 10. v. 122.

^c DRYDEN, Sat. 10. v. 190.

EPISTLE XVI.

PLINY to NEPOS.

I Have constantly observed, that among the actions and sayings of illustrious persons of both sexes, some particulars have made more noise, when others have been really greater, although less known. This my opinion was confirmed to me by what FANNIA related yesterday. She is granddaughter to that ARRIA, who was at once the comfort and example to her husband in his death. She told me many anecdotes of her grandmother, less public, but not less noble, than the circumstance of her death. I believe,
you

you will be as much amazed to read, as I was to hear the accounts.

Her husband, CÆCINNA PÆTUS, was sick; her son was sick at the same time; and both, as was then thought, past all hopes of recovery. Her son died. He was a youth endued with the various beauties of mind and body; and with a modesty equal to them all. He was dear to his parents, not only as their son, but also for his excellent qualities. She prepared, and conducted his funeral in such a manner, that her husband remained entirely ignorant of what had happened: for whenever she entered his bed-chamber, she pretended her son was alive and better; and when he often enquired, how the boy did? she answered he had slept well, and had eaten his food with a good appetite. But as soon as her tears, too long pent in, had absolutely conquered her, and were bursting forth, she retired, and then gave herself up to grief. Again, when she had composed herself, she returned with dry eyes, and a cheerful countenance, as if she had quitted all her grief for the loss of her son, at the door of her husband's chamber.

I must confess, it was a brave action in her to draw the steel, to plunge it into her bosom, to pull the dagger out again, to present it to her husband, and then to use that immortal, and almost divine expression, PÆTUS, *it gives no pain*. But when she did, and when she said this, she had fame and immortality before her eyes. It seems, therefore, a greater action in her, without the reward of eternal applause, or the prospect of glory, to hide her tears, to conceal her sorrow, and to act the mother when she had lost her son.

SCRIBONIANUS had taken up arms against CLAUDIUS in *Illyricum*: PÆTUS had engaged himself on the same side, and SCRIBONIANUS being killed, PÆTUS was brought prisoner to *Rome*. He was going
into

into the ship, when *ARRIA* earnestly entreated the soldiers, that she might be put on board with him. "You will allow, says she, a man, who has been consul, to have some servants to dress him, to attend at his meals, to put on his shoes. Let me go, and I alone will perform all those offices." Her request was denied: but she hired a fishing-boat, and in that small vessel followed the ship.

The same *ARRIA*, meeting the wife of *SCRIBONIANUS* in the palace of *CLAUDIUS*, at the time she voluntarily disclosed all she knew of the conspirators, said to her, "Offer not to speak a word to me: I shall not hear you. Your husband *SCRIBONIANUS* was killed in your bosom, and yet you live." From whence it plainly appears, that the heroical manner, in which she chose to die, did not proceed from a sudden thought.

When her son-in-law *THRASEA* ^k was endeavouring by his prayers to divert her from the design she had formed to put herself to death; and, among other arguments, said, "If I were condemned to die, would you therefore have your daughter die with me?" she made answer, "Certainly, if she had lived as long, and as happily with you, as I have lived with *PÆTUS* ^l."

By this answer, she alarmed her friends, and was more closely watched. She perceived it, and said, "Your endeavours are vain: you may force me to die with anguish, but you cannot hinder me from death itself." While she uttered these words, she leapt out of her chair, and dashed her head with such prodigious violence against the opposite wall, that she fell down in a manner dead. When she was brought to herself again, she said, "I told you, by denying me the liberty of an easy death, you would only compel me to find out one more pain-

^k *THRASEA PÆTUS.*

^l *CÆCINNA PÆTUS.*

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

“ful.” Are not these greater sayings even than, PÆTUS, *it gives no pain?* Yet these, which were preparatory to the other, so much celebrated in the world, are entirely unknown. All this confirms the observation, with which I first set out, that some particular actions and sayings are more renowned, whilst others are more noble. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The catastrophe of ARRIA and PÆTUS is related in one of the *Tatlers* ^a, of which papers Sir RICHARD STEEL was, in general, the reputed author: but he is mistaken in the story. CÆCINNA PÆTUS was put to death by the emperor CLAUDIUS; whereas the author of that paper cites a letter for his execution from the emperor NERO, who was much less guilty of his murder than Sir RICHARD STEEL.

FURIUS CAMILLUS SCRIBONIANUS, governor of *Dalmatia* ^a, joined with CÆCINNA PÆTUS in raising a rebellion against CLAUDIUS; but they had scarce appeared in arms, when their soldiers, terrified by evil omens, or more probably afraid of the emperor's power, not only deserted, but betrayed their commanders. SCRIBONIANUS was obliged to take refuge in the island of *Issa* ^o; where he was seized and put to death, *in gremio sua uxoris* ^p: “in the bosom of his wife,” as appears by this epistle, whilst PÆTUS was carried prisoner to *Rome*. He there received his condemnation, and with it the permission of chusing what sort of death he thought most eligible. But CÆCINNA, however bold in the field; and at the head of thousands, could not look at the more calm approaches of death with the resolution of a Roman: his constancy forsook him, and he shewed great reluctance to leave the world. ARRIA, sorry and ashamed to see him betray a weakness, to which her soul was a stranger; and perhaps, secretly conscious, that she was the cause why he wished to live; snatched a dagger from his side, and stabbed herself before his eyes,

^a N° 72. Saturday, September 24. 1769.

^a A province in *Illyricum*, bordering upon the *Adriatic*.

^o An island in the *Adriatic*, over-against *Dalmatia*.

^p JUNIA.

with

with an intrepid heroism, that at once demonstrated her courage and her love. Thus fell *ARRIA* ¹, the first of that name, whom history takes notice of; and she no sooner expired, than *PÆTUS*, fired by her example, and encouraged by her last words, hastened to put an end to his life in the same manner, and by the same weapon.

CÆCINNA PÆTUS and *ARRIA* left behind them a daughter, who bore her mother's name, and was married to *THRASEA PÆTUS*. From this identity of names have arisen the various chronological mistakes, into which not only the *Tatler*, but other writers have fallen.

THRASEA PÆTUS made a considerable figure in the reign of *NERO*. He was a man of strict morals, and unflinching resolution; beloved by the people, and of great weight in the senate; an able and an unbiassed patriot, and so powerful in eloquence, that he often stopped the current of iniquity, which would otherwise have overturned and destroyed the state. Such a man was particularly odious to the emperor and the court minions: every action of his life was not only a reproach to their vices, but, what was of more consequence, a bar to their tyranny. It had been impolitic not to stop the progress of such conspicuous merit, and such spreading virtue. *THRASEA*, therefore, was accused before the senate of various crimes, amounting to high treason; and, together with *SORANUS*, and his daughter *SERVILIA*, whose story is extremely melancholy and affecting, was condemned to die; the manner of their death being left to their own election. *THRASEA* was in his garden, accompanied by many friends of considerable rank and character, particularly *DEMETRIUS* the philosopher, when the quaestor *DOMITIUS CÆCILIANUS* came to him from the senate, with the order of his condemnation. The whole company, except himself, burst into tears; and his wife *ARRIA* immediately resolved to follow her mother's example, and die with her husband: but *THRASEA* interposed, and insisted she should live for the sake of their daughter *FANNIA* ², at that time married to *HELVIDIUS PRISCUS*, a noble Roman, equally hating, and hated by *NERO*. The sixteenth annual of *TACITUS*, from whence these memoirs

¹ She was nearly related to the empress *MESSALINA*. Vid. *DION. CASSIUS*, Lib. 60.

² The character of *FANNIA* is given by *PLINY* in the 7th Book, Epist. 19.

of THRASEA PÆTUS are derived, is imperfect; but the last chapter is too remarkable, not to be inserted, especially, as it gives some account of the manner in which PÆTUS chose to die. The words of the historian are these :

*Tum progressus [THRASEA PÆTUS] in porticum, illic a quæstore reperitur, lætitiæ propior, quia HELVIDIUM generum suum Italiâ tantum arceri cognoverat. Accepto debinc senatus consulto, HELVIDIUM et DEMETRIUM in cubiculum inducit; porrectisque utriusque brachii venis, postquam cruorem effudit, humum super spargens, propius vacato quæstore, Libemus, inquit, JOVI LIBERATORI. Specta juvenis, et omen quidem dii prohibeant: ceterum in ea tempora natus es, quibus firmare animum expediat constantibus exemplis. Post lentitudine exitus graves cruciatus afferente, obversis in DEMETRIUM * * * * **

“ Then [THRASEA PÆTUS] going into his gallery, was met there by the questor, whom he received rather with joy, than dejection, because he had been informed, that his son-in-law HELVIDIUS was only doomed to banishment out of Italy: and now submitting to his sentence, he took HELVIDIUS and DEMETRIUS into his bed-chamber, and stretching out both his arms, after the veins in each had been cut, he sprinkled some of his blood upon the ground; and calling the questor to come nearer, he said, This is my libation to JUPITER the deliverer. Young man, behold this! and may the Gods avert the omen from you! But you are born in times, that render it necessary to fortify the mind by examples of resolution. After this, the slow manner of his death bringing on grievous tortures, he turned [his eyes] towards DEMETRIUS * * * * *.” Here the annal breaks off, and leaves us to hope, that PÆTUS was soon relieved; and that so noble a soul remained not long in pain.

As these stories of the two ARRIAS, and their husbands, have been spun out into a great length, the only farther remark to be made upon this epistle is, that scarce any of all the heroic actions of the first ARRIA inspire us with a more exalted idea of her, than when she chuses to expose herself to the wind and waves in a small fishing-boat, even from Dalmatia to Rome, rather than to stay in safety, when her lord was in danger: an example of female courage, resolution, and affection, rarely, if ever, to be equalled.

E P I S T L E XVII.

P L I N Y *to* S E R V I A N U S .

IT is so long since I heard from you, that I must ask, if all things are right? If they are, is business your obstruction? Or, if you are not employed, are the opportunities of writing few or none? Deliver me from this state of doubt: it is a situation I cannot bear. Relieve me, though you send your letters by a particular messenger. I will pay his travelling expences: nay, I will give him more; let him but tell me what I wish to hear. I am well, if a man can be said to be well, who lives in perpetual suspense and anxiety, expecting and fearing, every hour, all that can possibly happen to his dearest friend upon earth. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S :

These short letters, which contain only compliments and civilities, that passed between particular friends, many hundred years ago, must appear trifling and unengaging, when they succeed such a letter as the sixteenth. And indeed, when we look into these kind of epistles separately, there is nothing in their style and subject very remarkable, or extraordinary: but, when we consider them all together, they tend to strengthen and establish the character of politeness, which our author so justly deserves. They are thrown in by the editors, without any regard to the letters, immediately preceding, or immediately following; and, like small diamonds ill set, they not only lose their own little share of lustre, but shew the awkwardness of those jewellers, into whose hands they have fallen.

EPISTLE XVIII.

PLINY to CATILIUS SEVERUS.

IT was incumbent upon me, when consul, to return the thanks, and to make the compliments of the republic to our emperor. After I had done this, with a due regard to the time and manner of speaking in the senate, I imagined it agreeable to the duty of a good citizen, to expatiate more copiously on every head, and to send the whole abroad, in a volume: first, that the emperor, by this tribute of applause, might be better pleased with the just picture of his great virtues: next, that succeeding princes may be animated by his example, rather than by any precepts of mine, to pursue the only road to the same true glory. For, certainly, to instruct a prince, what he ought to be, is a very noble, but a very arduous task, and carries with it an air of vanity: but to praise the best of princes, and, by that method, to hold out a light, as from a watch-tower, by which his successors may steer their course, is not a work of arrogance, but of infinite use. It is no small pleasure to me, that when I had a mind to recite this entire performance to my friends, and did not send them any written or particular invitations, but only a general notice to come to me, when it was convenient for them, and they were most at leisure. As soon as they were advertised of my inclinations, and I must observe, that at *Rome* there is never, or, at least, very seldom, leisure, or convenient time to hear rehearals, they assembled two days together, for that purpose, in extreme bad weather: and, when my own modesty would have put a stop to the rehearal, they absolutely required me to continue it a
third



third day. Am I to attribute this honour to myself, or to their regard for learning? I rather think to the latter; which, after it has been almost destroyed, is now reviving. But what was the subject, which occasioned this earnest attention of my audience? for, in the senate, where it was absolutely necessary to undergo the fatigue of hearing such encomiums, we used to grow tired in a moment's time; and yet now, three days were not found too long to rehearse and hear a panegyric of the same kind. It is not, that there is more eloquence in this work, but that it is written with a willing heart, and consequently, with a greater spirit of freedom. It will be a fresh accumulation of praise, therefore, to our emperor, that those speeches, which were heretofore as odious, as they were false, are now become as amiable, as they are true. But I confess, I was not more delighted with the attention, than the judgement of my audience; for I could observe, that my most severe remarks gave them the greatest satisfaction. I am conscious indeed, that I have rehearsed to a few, what I have written for all: nevertheless, as if future readers would concur in their judgement and taste, I cannot but own I rejoice greatly, that their ears can bear such open and spirited writing. And, as in former times, the theatres were taught a false taste in music; so now I hope to see, that the same places will be taught to relish nothing but true harmony. Those, indeed, who write with no other view than to please, will write in such a manner, as they imagine may please: but with respect to my particular performance, I am confident, the true reasons of my taking greater freedom and latitude will be plainly discovered; since those parts of my discourse, which bear close and hard, must appear more foreign and forced, than those, which are penned in the gaiety and exultation of heart. And yet it is my ardent prayer, that the time may come; I wish it were arrived, when all

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soothing

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soothing panegyric, however now just and proper, shall give place to honest and severe truths.

Here you have a full account of my three days work. I wish, in your absence, you may feel the same pleasure, from the encouragement given to study and learning in general, and the compliments paid me, on this particular occasion, which you would certainly have felt, had you been upon the spot. Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

This epistle ought to have been immediately subsequent to the thirteenth, as they both relate to the same subject, the panegyric upon TRAJAN. In the thirteenth epistle, addressed to ROMANUS, our author discovers great fears and anxiety for his favourite work: he dwells upon the difficulty of the theme, and courts the approbation of his readers. But the style of this epistle to SEVERUS is more laboured and diffused; and the author here speaks of his panegyric with a confidence and satisfaction, arising from the applause which he had already received.

As some passages in this epistle are a little obscure, the following observations may not be deemed unnecessary.

Deinde, ut futuri principes, non quasi à magistro, sed tamen sub exemplo præmonerentur, quâ potissimum viâ possent ad eandem gloriam niti: "I had a mind to point out to future princes, rather by his example, than by any precept, the "paths of true glory." PLINY imagines, vanity might hinder future princes from learning the maxims of government, but ambition might, probably, lead them to imitate TRAJAN: they would abhor a preceptor, but they would accept of a guide.

Animadverti enim severissima quæque vel maximè satisfacere: "I observed a general satisfaction, even in those places "where I was most severe." The severity, which PLINY hints at in this sentence, is that part of the panegyric, which aims at the cruelties and impositions of preceding Cæsars. But the arrows, which were directed at the Roman emperors, must, at the same time, hit the Roman people: the

the former could not have been absolute tyrants, unless the latter had submitted themselves to be absolute slaves.

Ac sicut olim theatra malè musicos canere docuerunt, ita nunc in spem adducor, posse fieri, ut eadem theatra benè canere musicos doceant : “ And as the theatre formerly taught the singers a “ bad manner in singing, so now I am led to hope, that “ the same theatres may teach them a better grace and man- “ ner.” This is a fine satirical allusion to NERO, who had not only corrupted the morals, but the ears of the *Romans*. He had substituted discord in the room of harmony. He had banished the graces, and introduced the furies. Arts and sciences were depressed and overthrown : nor did learning, or virtue, recover the blows they had received, till the beginning of TRAJAN’s government. It is not to be denied, that PLINY has introduced this sentence abruptly, and without connexion : but it may be considered, that as the epistle was written to a friend, who well knew the meaning of the comparison, there was not that occasion for contexture and exactness, as in a more elaborate kind of writing. In familiar letters, half sentences and hints are sufficient ; but in history, or any work of gravity and importance, such a style would not only be improper, but totally inexcusable.

E P I S T L E XIX.

PLINY to CALVISIUS.

AS I have been accustomed, so I shall still continue to beg your advice with regard to my estate. Some lands, adjoining to mine, and, indeed, intermixed with them, are to be sold. They are attended with many circumstances, which tempt me, and many, which deter me from the purchase.

I am chiefly induced by the beauty, that will result from their being laid out together ; and then again, the convenience will be no less than the pleasure : the same works may be carried on at both places, for both may be visited with the same trouble, and the same expence : the same overseer may take care of both, and the undermanagers of each may almost be

the same persons. We need only fit up one house for an habitation, and barely keep the other from falling to ruin. The expence, saved in furniture, in head-servants, in gardeners, workmen, such as smiths, farriers, and even in the hunting equipage, must be entered into the computation; for it is of great consequence in œconomy, whether you have these collected together in one place, or dispersed in several.

On the other hand, I am afraid it will be imprudent to trust so large an estate, lying all together, to the same climate, and to the same accidents. It seems more adviseable to provide against casualties, and all sudden alterations of the weather, by having our lands parcelled out in different situations. The change too of air and place, and the variety in rambling about, has something in it very agreeable.

Now the principal point of my deliberation is this; the soil is fertile, rich and well-watered: it consists of fields, vineyards, and woods, yielding a produce, which, though it will amount to a very moderate, yet will be a very certain income. But then the soil, as fertile as it is, has been much impoverished by the indigence of the husbandmen. The last possessor very often sold the whole stock; and though by that method he furnished himself with a sum of money for the present, yet he hurt the estate, by depriving his husbandmen of proper means to cultivate the lands, which are now over-run with brambles and briars. We must therefore provide a set of honest labourers; for I have none among my slaves, who are fit for this purpose, nor are there any left upon the land. It remains, that you should know at what rate there seems a possibility of making the purchase. Three millions of sesterces¹ are the price: not but it was formerly set up at five millions², but by the extreme poverty of

¹ Three millions of sesterces amount, in English money, to 242187. 15 s.

² Five millions of sesterces amount to 403647. 11 s. 8 d.

the

the husbandmen, and the general calamity of the times, as the income, so the purchase of the land, is diminished.

You will ask, if I can easily get together three millions of sesterces? My substance, indeed, is almost all in land: however, I have some money out at interest, nor shall I find it difficult to borrow. I can take it up from my mother-in-law, whose coffers I may use as freely as my own. Therefore, let not this embarrass you, if there are no other objections in the way; which, I must beg, you will well consider; for, as in all other affairs, so especially in the disposal of money, your experience and your judgement are unexceptionable. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

At the same time that the computation of unavoidable expences, in PLINY'S intended purchase, may demonstrate the justice and wisdom of his oeconomy, we have the advantage of finding, by this epistle, such furniture, and servants, as the Romans thought absolutely necessary in their country-houses.

The *Procurator* [or Overseer] had the same kind of office as our land-steward; the person, who had the inspection of the other servants, belonging to the husbandry, and, who was to manage, and account for, the produce of the estate.

The *Actores* [Under-Managers] although generally translated Bailiffs, seem to have been inferior to the persons, who, with us, go under that denomination. They were slaves, employed in all the servile offices belonging to the estate. They were under the command of the *procurator*; and they cultivated the lands, as the word it self seems to imply, by their own labour, and obedience. The scholiasts have been very explicit in their annotations upon this epistle. They refer us to the seventh and eighth chapters of the first book of COLUMELLA, in which there are some curious observations, that are not unworthy of inspection.

Sumptus Atriensum. The *Atrienfis* was a servant of most especial trust, *qui domini negotia procurabat, res venales distrahebat, debita exigebat, et in alios servos non parum juris*

usurpabat v: "Who managed the affairs of his master, disposed of all saleable goods, gathered in his debts, and assumed great authority over the rest of the servants." He was such a servant as our house-steward. The same author gives the reason, why he was called *atriensis*: *dictus quòd atria, hoc est primæ domûs parti, ubi apud antiquos divitiæ adservabantur, custos adhibebatur*: "He took his name from the *atrium*, because the custody of the first part of the house was his province." From hence it appears, that the ancients kept their money in their halls, unless *divitiæ* might signify the most valuable part of the personal estate, the images of their ancestors; which were usually set in porches, at the entrance of their houses.

The *Fapiarius* [the Gardiner] is a name derived from the art of forming various figures and images in trees and hedges. This was an art, which the ancients thought absolutely necessary in a gardiner: for PLINY tells us, that in the garden belonging to his chief seat in *Tuscany* v, his own name, and his gardiner's name, were cut in box; and that his whole garden was filled with variety of figures, images, and arbours, formed out of the trees, which grew in it. This fashion has been very much practised in *England**, till of late years, when a more agreeable, and more extended taste has prevailed.

The *Venatoria Instrumenta* were the nets, spears, and other utensils belonging to the hunting equipage; a piece of parade necessary for persons of our author's rank to assume, and maintain. PLINY would otherwise scarce have reckoned it among his rural expences; since, as has been already observed, he was a sportsman, rather by compliance, than by inclination.

v ULPIAN.

v Book v. Ep. 6.

* The motto of the *Garter*, and other devices, cut in box, are still to be seen at *Oxford*, in *New-college* garden; and a nobleman, at his seat near *London*, had, some years ago, the Coronation dinner, in yew, of K. WILLIAM and Q. MARY.

E P I S T L E XX.

P L I N Y to M A X I M U S.

DO you remember, that you have often read of the many contentions, which arose from the law of voting by tablets? and how much glory, or reproach, it brought upon the law-giver himself? But, now it has met with the unanimous approbation of the senate, as the best of laws. All demanded tablets on the day of the election¹. We had, indeed, exceeded those bounds, that ought to be preserved in an assembly, by giving our votes in this open manner; so that there was no time allowed for speaking, nor was the modesty of silence, or even the distinction of seats, regarded. Great and confused clamours were poured forth from every side. All were running here and there, with the candidates whom they favoured. Numerous crowds appeared in the middle of the senate-house, several different circles were formed, and there was one, universal confusion: to such a degree had we forsaken the customs of our ancestors, among whom order, decency, and tranquillity, preserved the majesty and reverence of the place. There are still some old men alive, from whom I have often heard, that the antient method of holding the election² was in this manner: the candidate being called by his name, a profound silence ensued: he then spoke for himself, he gave an account of his life, and he produced witnesses of his behaviour, and persons, who could give him commendations; either the officer, under whom he had served in the army, or the civil magistrate, to whom he was questor, or both, if he could. Besides these, he appealed to some of the voters, and they always spoke with weight, and in

¹ *Comitiorum die,*² *Comitia.*

few words. This method was much more prevalent than a canvas. Sometimes the candidate objected to the family, the age, or even the manners of his competitor. The senate heard all, with a becoming gravity; so that merit much oftner prevailed than favour. But, these laudable customs having been corrupted by the overbearing interest of particular persons, it was thought proper to establish this method of voting by tablets, as the best remedy: and, indeed, for some time it had all the good, that could be desired from it, because it was a new thing. But I fear abuses may arise hereafter, out of the remedy itself; because there is danger, that this tacit manner of voting may be an umbrage for the most shameless partiality; for who is so careful of acting honestly in secret, as in public? Many have regard to their character, few to their conscience. But, it is too soon to form conjectures of future events. In the mean time, by the benefit of the tablets, we shall have such magistrates, as most deserve to be elected. For, it has happened in these elections, as in *recuperatory judgements*, that by our sudden allotments we had not time afforded us to be corrupted.

I have transmitted these passages to you, first, to entertain you with something new; next, that I may sometimes speak of the commonwealth: for as we have fewer opportunities of treating upon that subject, than the antients had, so we ought the less to neglect any that offer. And besides, must we never leave off those old forms, *How do you spend your time? Are you well?* But let us give our letters a turn, that is neither low, nor vulgar, nor altogether confined to private affairs.

The whole empire is, at present, under the direction of a single person^a, who, for the common good, has taken upon himself the cares and labours of all his subjects; but yet, that a just temperament may be

^a The emperor TRAJAN.

observed,

observed, a part of his power is continually derived to us through channels, which take their rise from a most beneficent spring, which we are not only at liberty to use ourselves, but impart, by letters, to our absent friends. Adieu.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

The subject of this epistle is very curious. It treats of the Tabellarian law, and the good and ill consequences, that might proceed from a revival of that law.

The *lex tabellaria*^b was first enacted by AULUS GABINIUS, tribune of the people, in the six hundred and fourteenth year of the city. It was intended to procure to the people a freedom in voting: for when they gave their votes in the *Comitia* openly, before the face of the governing magistrates, they were often awed, and carried away, against their consciences, by the fear of offending those great men. This law prevented so unjust and so fatal an influence. However, it had been long laid aside and disregarded, but was now revived, in the reign of TRAJAN, for the reasons which PLINY assigns.

The manner of voting by the tablets was thus: each voter had as many tablets delivered to him as there were candidates, one of whose names was written upon each tablet. The person, who voted, threw into a box, prepared for that purpose, the name of the candidate, whose interest he espoused. Public officers were appointed to take out the tablets of every century, and for each name they made a point upon another tablet. Hence the phrase, *Omne tulit punctum*: "All the points decided the election in his favour."

The ancient manner of proceeding in the choice of magistrates was extremely wise and equitable. Our author says, there were old men still alive, who remembered it to have been the constant custom, that the candidate was to give a just and modest account of his life and actions: he was to produce witnesses, his superiors, under whom he had served, to prove the truth of his assertions: he was to appeal

^b It is sometimes called *lex Gabinia*, from the original author of it; and sometimes *lex Cassia*, from *Cassius*, tribune of the people, who, in the year six hundred and sixteen, made farther additions and amendments to this law.

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to such of the voters who knew him, to give evidence in support of his character; and he was to appear, in every light, qualified for the employment at which he aspired. *Ita sapius digni quàm gratiosi prævalebant*: "Therefore merit rather than favour ofteneft prevailed." Had the Romans kept up this custom, in all its original purity and strictness, corruption could scarce ever have prevailed in the state.

Interim plane remedium fuit: erat enim novum et subitum: "It was certainly a remedy for some time, for it was new and sudden." I apprehend the meaning of this to be, that new laws, in favour of the people, are generally observed and obeyed at first; and the *lex tabellaria*, which was in a manner a new law, had been so suddenly proposed, and so immediately put into execution, that there was no time for opposition. It took place, like lightning, with such a rapidity, that the corruptors and seducers of the people, against whom it was chiefly levelled, were wounded before they heard the thunder. They were surpris'd unawares, and had no opportunity to summon their troops, and give out the word against so excellent and so equitable a statute.

But PLINY, too well acquainted with the general corruption, that was prevalent at Rome, is not without his fears of bad consequences, even from this revived law. *Sed vereor, ne procedente tempore, ex ipso remedio vitia nascantur: est enim periculum, ne tacitis suffragiis impudentia irrepat*: "But I fear, that, in process of time, the same, or other vices, may spring from this remedy: for there is danger, that a very bold partiality may be the production of these silent votes. Men, whom public shame might have kept within the bounds of virtue, will undauntedly go beyond those bounds, when they are in no danger of being discovered: and therefore it is probable, there may as great evils hereafter arise from the insolent proceedings of persons unknown, as formerly have arisen from the fears, dependence, and expectations of the people."

Nam ut in recuperatoriis judiciis, sic nos in his comitiis quasi repente apprehensi, sinceri iudices fulmus: "For as in recuperatory judgements, so in these elections, as if called upon unawares to the execution of our office, we were sincere and upright judges." The *Recuperatores* were judges, delegated by the prætor to take cognizance of some

some particular fact, or to decide the controversies about receiving and recovering goods, which had been lost, or taken away. They were judges only by chance, and on particular occasions; and being chosen and appointed all on a sudden, they were least liable to partiality: the parties had not time to seduce, or influence the court; and, in this sense, the *Recuperatores* are compared by PLINY to the persons, who lately gave their votes for magistrates suddenly, impartially, and according to the *lex tabellaria*.

E P I S T L E XXI.

PLINY, to NERATIUS PRISCUS.

I Hear VALERIUS MARTIAL is dead, which gives me much affliction. He was an acute, sprightly, ingenious man, and had no less candour than salt and poignancy in his writings. When he took his final leave of me, I made him a small present, to bear the charges of his journey. It was a present to acknowledge my friendship; it was a present for the little poetical panegyric he had bestowed upon me. Our ancestors never failed to bestow peculiar honours, or rewards of money, upon those authors, who celebrated particular persons, or cities. But in these our days, as other noble and excellent customs have been laid aside, so this, more especially, has been abolished: for, ever since we have ceased to deserve praise, we think it a folly to receive it. Are you desirous to know the verses which excited my gratitude? I would refer you to the volume, if I did not retain some by heart: if these please you, look for the rest among his works. He addresses himself to his muse, and commands her to look for me at my house upon the Esquilian hill^c, but approach it with great respect.

^c One of the seven hills of Rome; at this day called, *Il Monte di Santa Maria Maggiore*.

Your

Your zeal with proper judgement shew,
 Take heed your time and his to know ;
 Nor knock, when mellow, at his gate,
 And pertly for admittance wait.
 Whole days to studious thoughts assign'd,
 His clients take up all his mind,
 Their int'rest anxious to support,
 And charm with eloquence the court.
 So well he speaks in ev'ry cause,
 So deep his knowledge in the laws,
 That future time shall scarce agree
 Whether with nobler energy,
 The pow'rs of strong persuasion hung
 On his, or on a TULLY'S tongue.

At ev'ning you may safely go,
 When the first candles are burnt low ;
 Then when the merry glass goes round,
 The guests with flow'ry chaplets crown'd,
 Their curled locks well oil'd, the room
 Sweet scented with the rich perfume :
 'Tis then your time ; that hour belongs
 To verses, epigrams, and songs :
 No CATO, rigid and severe,
 Will then refuse to lend an ear.

Did not a man, who has written thus of me, deserve to be parted with in the most tender manner ? and can I do less, now he is dead, than grieve for him, as one of my best friends ? He gave me all that was in his power ; he would have given more,
 had

had he been able, and yet what more can be given to a man, than glory, praise, and external renown? But his writings will not last to eternity. Perhaps not: however, he certainly wrote them in hopes of their eternity. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S .

One of the chaffest editions of MARTIAL, now extant, was published, some years ago, for the use of *Westminster school*^d. In that edition we find the dross extirpated, and nothing remaining except the ore. Elegance and politeness ought never to be separated from poetry: they are the characteristics of humanity, and distinguish the man from the brute: but the antient poets are too often defective in these points; they soil their works with expressions nauseously immodest, and absurdly inconsistent with the untainted characters of the muses. MARTIAL has been particularly erroneous in the indecency of his wit, as if he thought obscenity had been the most probable method of securing to himself immortality. He was, by birth, a *Spaniard*. The place of his nativity, if I mistake not, was *Bilbilis*^e in *Ar-ragon*. He came very young to *Rome*, and lived there during the entire reigns of VITELLIUS, VESPASIAN, TITUS, DOMITIAN, and NERVA. But the emperor TRAJAN shewing him no great encouragement, he returned to his own country, where, in about five or six years, he died. He was in high esteem with TITUS and DOMITIAN, especially with the latter, who conferred many favours upon him; favours, which MARTIAL returned with ingratitude; for he flattered that emperor living, and abused him dead. Such mean insults, after such base adulations, might be one of the causes, that induced TRAJAN to treat him with contempt and disdain. Nor can I think, that the epigram upon PLINY, however just and applicable, was composed for any other end, than to ingratiate himself with one of the emperor's chief favourites, by whose recommendation and countenance he hoped to take off, or, at least, to abate the indignation, which TRAJAN had conceived against him.

Our author, throughout this epistle, seems to be endeavouring at plausible reasons, and tacit excuses, for hav-

^d THOMAS FITZGERALD editore. ^e Now *Calataiud*.

ing

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ing formerly appeared the friend of so indecent and so lascivious a writer. He is conscious, that PRISCUS may be surprised to find him lamenting the death of MARTIAL; and therefore he begins by setting the epigrammatist in as advantageous a light as possible. He represents him as a man of bitterness, but of candor; a satirist, but not a libeller; and then proceeds to quote the epigram in the tenth book, part of which we have already seen. Let us now view it all together.

MARTIALIS. Lib. x. Ep. XIX ^f.

*Nec doctum satis, et parum severum,
Sed non rusticulum nimis libellum,
Facundo, mea, PLINIO, Thalia,
I perfer: brevis est labor peractæ
Altum vincere tramitem Suburæ.
Illic ORPHEA protinus videbis
Udi vertice lubricum theatri,
Mirantesque feras, avemque regis,
Raptum quæ Phryga pertulit tonanti.
Illic parva tui domus PEDONIS
Cælata est aquilæ minore pennâ.
Sed ne tempore non tuo disertam
Pulsas ebria januam, videto.
Totos dat tetricæ dies MINERVÆ,
Dum centum studet auribus virorum
Hoc, quod secula, posterique possint
Arpinis quoque comparare chartis:
Seras tutior ibis ad lucernas.
Hæc hora est tua, dum furit Lyæus,
Cum regnat rosa, cum madent capilli,
Tunc me vel rigidi legant CATONES.*

^f Editio Delphini.

MARTIAL

MARTIAL to his MUSE.

" Tho' not much art, or learned geer,
 " Does in my careless book appear ;
 " Yet, thank my stars, at least 'tis free
 " From rude uncouth rusticity.
 " To PLINY's house then, muse, repair :
 " Such as it is, present it there,
 " To PLINY's house, whose learned name
 " Stands foremost in the rolls of fame.
 " Not long the way, nor great the pain
 " *Subura's* steep ascent to gain.
 " From the proud theatre's slippery height,
 " The sculptor's art detains your sight :
 " There ORPHEUS downwards seems to bend,
 " The savage herds around attend :
 " There does the bird his wings display,
 " Who bore the *Phrygian* boy away ;
 " There thy own PEDO's doors are sign'd
 " With one of that strong pinion'd kind,
 " With lesser wings he stands to view,
 " Than those, with which Jove's herald flew.
 " Your zeal, my muse, with judgement shew,
 " Take heed your time, and his to know ;
 " Nor knock, when mellow, at his gate,
 " Nor pertly for admittance wait.
 " Whole days to studious thoughts assign'd,
 " His clients take up all his mind :
 " Anxious their interest to support,
 " And charm with eloquence the court,
 " So well he speaks in ev'ry cause,
 " So deep his knowledge in the laws,
 " That future times shall scarce agree
 " Whether with nobler energy,

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“ The pow'rs of strong persuasion hung
 “ On his, or on a TULLY's tongue.

“ At ev'ning you may safely go,
 “ When the first candles are burnt low ;
 “ Then when the genial glass goes round,
 “ The guests with flow'ry chaplets crown'd,
 “ Their curled locks well oil'd, the room
 “ Sweet scented with the rich perfume :
 “ 'Tis then your time ; that hour belongs
 “ To verses, epigrams, and songs ;
 “ No CARO rigid and severe,
 “ Will then refuse to lend an ear.

The End of the THIRD BOOK.





PLINY'S EPISTLES.

BOOK IV.

EPISTLE I.

PLINY to FABATUS, *his wife's grandfather.*

AFTER so long an absence, you wish to see your granddaughter and me together. Your wish is extremely agreeable to us both; mutually so, upon my word. For we are equally desirous, even to an incredible degree of impatience, to see you; which we shall no longer defer: and therefore we are now making ready for our journey, resolved to hasten to you as soon as the roads are good. There will be one, and but one, short delay. We must turn out of the road towards my *Tuscan* territories, not to supervise my lands, and settle my family affairs, for that might be postponed,

but to perform a necessary duty. There is a city in the neighbourhood of my estate, named *Tifernum Tiberinum* ^a, which adopted me, when I was very young, for its patron. The inhabitants, with more affection than judgement, celebrate my arrival among them, discover the greatest concern when I depart from them, and have public rejoicings whenever they hear of my preferment. That I may make them suitable returns of gratitude, for to be outdone in affection is shameful, I have built them a temple at my own expence; and I should think it a kind of irreligion, since it is finished, to defer the dedication any longer. We shall be there the day of the dedication, which I intend to celebrate by a solemn feast; and perhaps we may stay the day following: but in that case, we shall make the more haste in the remainder of the journey. May we meet you and your daughter in full health! for chearful and gay we shall certainly find you, if we arrive in safety. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This is one of PLINY's family pieces. They are all remarkably amiable and engaging. They affect us the deeper, like dramatic representations, upon common and domestic subjects, because the case may be our own. Thus, *The Orphan* ^b sends the audience away in tears, when *The Mourning Bride* ^c rather moves their astonishment, than their sorrow. The distresses of MONIMIA may happen in every private family; but a woman must be a princess, before she can be as unfortunate as ALMERIA: and when PLINY writes upon exalted subjects, such as philosophy, eloquence, or the customs of the bar, we may admire his sentiments, and improve by his manner of expression: but when he corresponds with his intimate friends, or his near relations, the letters seem all our own, and we are ready, at this moment, to accompany him in his visit to FABATUS.

^a Now called *Citta di Castello* in *Umbria*.

^b By OTWAY.

^c By CONGREVE.

The solemn feast, mentioned in this letter, at the dedication of the temple, was a ceremony, which the heathens continued down, with many other religious customs, from the *Jews*. The consecration of temples was originally commanded by God himself. The first instance we find of it, is when the Almighty speaks to MOSES in these words: *Thou shalt take the anointing oil, and anoint the tabernacle and all that is therein, and shalt hallow it, and all the vessels thereof, and it shall be holy* ^d. The next is the dedication of SOLOMON'S temple in *Jerusalem*. The feast lasted seven days. On the eighth day *the king sent the people away, and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart*. The prayer of SOLOMON ^e, upon this occasion, is one of the noblest pieces of poetry, that even inspiration itself has ever communicated to mankind. It is at once the strongest example of the pathetic, and the sublime, that can be produced in any other author, sacred or profane. The chorus, which was sung by the people, contains all the energy of eloquence and profound adoration; and the whole scene manifested that grandeur of devotion, which became a wise and powerful prince, when at the head of his subjects he dedicated himself, his temple, and his people to his Creator.

The dedication of PLINY'S temple at *Tifernum* was attended with all these solemnities and superstitions of the Pagans. But sincerity of heart, humility of prayer, uprightness of intention, however misguided by erroneous principles, and outward ceremonies, must be acceptable, we may presume, in the sight of God.

^d Exodus xl. 7. 9.

^e 1 Kings, chap. viii.

E P I S T L E II.

PLINY to ATRIUS CLEMENS.

REGULUS has lost his son; the only misfortune he did not deserve, because I question, whether he thinks it one. He was a youth of quick parts, whatever use he might have made of them: and perhaps he would have acted rightly, if he did not take after his father. REGULUS had made him

free, that he might take full possession of his mother's fortune. Having thus released him from slavery, as those, who knew the temper of the man, generally termed it, he endeavoured to insinuate himself into his affections by a false, fulsome shew of fondness, very unusual in a parent. This is scarce credible; but consider, it was REGULUS. However, he mourns extravagantly for the loss of him. The boy had several little horses, both in the stable and at grass. He had likewise hounds of the large kind and the small. He had nightingales, parrots, and blackbirds; all which REGULUS put to death about the funeral pile. Nor was this the effect of his grief, but the vanity of shewing it.

There is a wonderful resort of all kinds of people to him. All men hate and detest him: yet he is visited in shoals, as if they loved and admired him. In short, to tell you freely my thoughts, in paying their court to REGULUS, they act towards him, as he hath done to others.

He keeps himself on the other side of the *Tiber*, at his country seat, where he has covered a large spot of ground with his immense porticos, and the banks of the river with his statues, expensive, amidst the height of avarice, and vain-glorious, under the lowest degree of infamy. Hence it is, that he puts the city in a hurry at this sickly season, and takes a pride in the action. He talks now of marrying again; in this, as in every thing else, the reverse of all other men. You will hear soon of the marriage of this mourner, the marriage of this old man; on one hand, too early in point of decency: on the other, too late in point of age. Would you know from whence I prophesy this? Not from his own declarations, for nothing can outdo him in untruths, but because it is very certain, REGULUS will do whatever ought not to be done. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This epistle will not afford great pleasure. It is defective in that amiable humanity, that generous good-nature, that softness of heart, which glow in PLINY so often, and on such various occasions. But some allowance is to be made for the personal dislike, and natural ill-will, which our author conceived against MARCUS REGULUS, whom he has represented † as a base insidious man, and who, in all probability, exerted the power, he enjoyed under DOMITIAN, to very ill purposes. However, the paternal tenderness of REGULUS demanded praise even from an enemy. Nor, in his intentions of marrying a second time, although perhaps a little late in life, can he be fairly charged either with indecency, or indiscretion: it may be presumed, that his regard to his son kept him from marrying before; and that the desire of an heir to his estate prompted him to marry now. These, and many other reflexions in this letter, rather turn to the praise of REGULUS, than add to the ill impressions, which some former letters ‡ have given us of him: and every line, in the epistle now treated of, is a proper lesson to all wise men, to keep themselves free from the overbearing prejudices of passion and resentment.

REGULUS *filium amisit*: “REGULUS has lost his son.” It is astonishing, that our author should have omitted, upon this occasion, a circumstance, which, if it were true, was hardly possible to have been forgotten. In the twentieth epistle of the second book, PLINY mentions it as a custom with REGULUS, *sibi per salutem filii pejurare*: and then adds, *facit hoc REGULUS non minus sceleratè quàm frequenter, quòd iram deorum, quos ipse quotidie fallit, in caput infelicis pueri detestatur*: “He swore by his son’s head; an oath, which REGULUS makes use of no less wickedly than frequently; and by which he calls down the anger of the gods, whom he provokes by daily perjuries, upon the head of this unhappy boy.” How much more to his purpose would this observation have been, which was now unhappily fulfilled, than any of those reflexions he has wantonly thrown out in this epistle? It is hardly excusable, in a heathen, not to have remarked so notorious a judgement.

† See Book 1. Epistle 5.

‡ See Book 1. Ep. 5. Book 2. Ep. 11 and 20.

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

Emancipavit. This might, perhaps, be done by only putting on him the *toga libera*, or *virilis*; for which the usual age was seventeen: but it seems to be in the power of a parent, either to shorten, or prolong the time; for CICERO tells ATTICUS, that, "upon his advice, he has laid aside all thoughts of going to *Arpinum*, though he had intended to have given his son the *toga virilis* at that place."

Emancipavit ut hæres matris existeret: "He emancipated him, that he might be rightfully his mother's heir." Emancipation gave the son a power of making a will; by which means he could give the estate, in case of his own death, to be disposed of by his father; whereas, if the youth died in nonage, the fortune, after the father's death, must go to the son's right heirs.

EPISTLE III.

PLINY to M. ARRIUS ANTONINUS.

THAT you have been twice consul, and acted with the dignity of the ancients in that office; that you have been proconsul of *Asia*; and that scarce any of your predecessors, or successors, your modesty prohibits me from saying, none, have equalled you; and that in morality, authority, and even in age, you are the principal person in our city, is, I confess, a very venerable and beautiful part of your character: and yet I admire you still more in your retirement. For, to season that severity of manners with an equal cheerfulness of temper; to mix that consummate gravity with as complete politeness, is no less difficult than great: and yet you do this with a certain incredible sweetness in your discourse, and more especially in your writings. When you speak, honey flows from you as from the mouth of NESTOR^h; and when you write, the bees seem to be employed in pouring into every line, and working into every sen-

^h Τῆς ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιθ'· γλυκίων εἶεν ἀυδῆ. HOM. Iliad. A. ʒ. 249.
Words sweet as honey from his lips distill'd. POPE.

tence,

tence, their extracts of the choicest flowers: So greatly was I charmed and affected, when I last read your Greek epigrams and iambics. What benevolence, what graces, what sweetness, what loveliness do they not contain! how like the ancients! how lively! how exact! I could not avoid thinking, that I read CALLIMACHUS or HERODES, or, if possible, a better author. Yet, neither of the two attempted, or excelled in both these kinds of writing. Is it possible for a Roman to be such a master of Greek? I protest, I believe the Attic purity is not in greater perfection at *Athens* itself. What need I say more? I envy the *Greeks*, because you have chosen to write in their language: nor is it difficult to guess, how you would succeed in your native tongue, when your performances, in a foreign and transplanted language, have been so excellent. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

In reviewing this epistle it is difficult to determine, whether the compliments themselves are preferable to the polite manner, in which they are conveyed. Each sentence rises gradually, and illustrates what went before. PLINY appears to have been a perfect master in the art of praise; and yet the bounds between praise and adulation are divided by so fine a thread, that the exact limits are almost imperceptible. A friend, indeed, is apt to speak more advantageously of us than we deserve; but then he speaks as he thinks, and errs from judgement, not from design. A flatterer lays aside truth, and aims only at pleasing; he deals about his encomiums without sincerity or distinction; and if a friend *slays his thousands*, a flatterer *slays his ten thousands*. The compliments in this letter are manifestly raised to the highest point of commendation, and therefore afford a choice collection for sycophants: but the author himself was undoubtedly sincere; and hereafter we shall find two other epistles, addressed to the same person, upon the same theme, and both in the most unlimited strains of applause.

CALLIMACHUS and HERODES, to whom PLINY likens his friend ANTONINUS, are men of great note and character
in

in the learned world. CALLIMACHUS, who was by birth an *African*, lived in the hundred and twenty fifth Olympiad, about two hundred and eighty years before the Christian æra. His works are too well known, and have employed too many of the literati, to need a long dissertation here. QUINTILIAN, where he treats of elegy, calls him the prince of that species of poetry. Madamè DACIER too, in her edition of CALLIMACHUS, affirms, *que parmi tout ce que la Grece ancienne nous a produit, il n'y a rien trouvé de plus elegant, ni rien de plus poli*: "That amidst all the productions of antient *Greece*, no author has been found more elegant or polite." And Monsieur LE FEVRE, her father, says, that CATULLUS and PROPERTIUS¹ have imitated CALLIMACHUS even to a degree of translation. What a loss then have we had in the works of ANTONINUS, if he equalled a poet of such superior wit and elegance?

The character of HERODES, the Athenian, is of another kind. He was the greatest orator of his time: his style was so chaste, his phraseology so correct, natural, and easy, that he was surnamed the *Greek tongue*. The comparison of ANTONINUS to two such men, each superlatively eminent in the arts of poetry and eloquence, establishes his fame as an author; and the beginning of this epistle celebrates him as a statesman. Thus he appears amiable in all lights. He was the grandfather of ANTONINUS PIUS, successor of ADRIAN, and seventeenth emperor of *Rome*.

¹ PROPERTIUS mentions CALLIMACHUS in several places, and particularly begins one of his elegies,

*Callimachi manes, et Coi sacra Philetæ
In vestrum, quæso, me finitè ire nemus.*

Several of the epigrams of CALLIMACHUS are still extant among the *Anthologia*.

EPISTLE IV.

PLINY to SOSSIUS SENECIO.

I Have a most sincere regard for CALVISIUS NEPOS. He is an industrious, upright, and learned man; which last qualification alone is always of great weight with me. He is very nearly related to my old chamber-fellow, and your particular friend, CARUS CALVISIUS; for he is his sister's son. Honour him; I intreat you, with the half year's tribuneship, upon his own, and upon his uncle's account. You will oblige me, you will oblige our friend CALVISIUS, you will oblige NEPOS himself; who will prove as responsible a debtor as either of us. You have conferred many favours upon many people: I dare affirm, you never made a better; and, except one or two, scarce ever so good a choice. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The military tribunes, who owed their original institution to ROMULUS, were, at first, created by the kings, and, afterwards, by the consuls. They had almost a dictatorial power in the army: they decided all controversies among the soldiers; they gave out the word; they took care of encampments; they presided over military works of every kind. This employment was esteemed a very high honour in the state; and to make it circulate the faster, these officers lasted only six months; during which time they wore a gold ring, in the same manner as Roman knights, and by way of distinction from common soldiers, who always wore rings of iron, which PLINY the elder calls *bellicæ virtutis insignia*.*

It is most probable, the emperors first introduced half-yearly tribuneships, to augment the number of their officers; and encrease the multitude of their dependants. The form of creating these tribunes was by delivering them a sword;

* Book 33. chap. 7.

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at which time, the consul, who performed the ceremony, generally made some short speech to the new tribune. The words of TRAJAN, upon a like occasion, have been much applauded, who, when he instituted SURA commander over the prætorian cohorts, said to him, "Take this sword; draw it in my defence, if I govern well: if otherwise, employ it to my destruction." SOSSIUS¹, to whom this epistle is addressed, was, at this time, consul; and is, in all probability, the same person, to whom PLUTARCH dedicates his life of THESEUS, DEMOSTHENES, and many others.

¹ SOSSIUS SENECIO was consul four times; the first under NERVA, the three last under TRAJAN.

EPISTLE V.

PLINY to SPARSUS.

IT is reported, that, at the request of the *Rhodians*, ÆSCHINES read to them his own speech, and afterwards the speech of DEMOSTHENES; both which were received with the highest applause. I am not in the least surpris'd, that this happened to the compositions of such great orators; since some of the most learned men have heard, with the very same attention and approbation, even at the expence of trouble and fatigue, one of my orations, during two whole days; although there was no rivalship, nor any controversy, to fire them. For the *Rhodians* were not only excited by the peculiar beauties of the two orations, but were spurred on by their eagerness of comparing them together. My speech had the happiness to please, without the advantage of any emulation: whether deservedly, or not, you will judge, when you read the book; the bulk of which hinders me from a longer preface in my letter; for, undoubtedly, where it is in my power, I ought to be concise, that the volume itself may be more easily excus'd, although it certainly is not swelled beyond the extensiveness of the theme. Farewell.

OBSER-

OBSERVATIONS.

In the course of these observations, the picture of DEMOSTHENES^a, as an orator, has been drawn at full length; and, in the third epistle of the second book, our author has taken notice of that very circumstance, relating to the *Rhodiensians*, which he, again, mentions in the beginning of this epistle. When these two orators are reviewed together in one light, ÆSCHINES bears the same degree of comparison to DEMOSTHENES, as POMPEY bears to CÆSAR; equally great, but not equally fortunate. It is true, the precedency in eloquence is justly given to DEMOSTHENES: but there are some circumstances in his character, which turn the balance equal, if not in favour of his rival; particularly, that instance of cowardice, which he shewed at the battle of *Chæroneæ*, where he flung away his buckler, and betook himself to flight. In his answer to ÆSCHINES upon this shameful circumstance, he speaks of it slightly, and with some sort of peevishness, like a man, who feels himself in the wrong, and is desirous to remember it as little as possible. The truth is, he had all the resolution of a civil magistrate, and all the spirit of a true patriot. These qualities he exerted to the utmost degree, amidst the perpetual dangers, which surrounded him, from the partizans of a great and potent king: but he wanted that military courage and intrepidity, that presence of mind, and firmness of temper, in the day of battle, which are the true characteristics of a brave man. Perhaps these qualifications, if possessed in any eminent degree, ought to be born with us, and are not to be acquired, either by reason, or by custom. HORACE owns his defect in point of bravery, and tells VARUS,

*Tecum Philippos et celerem fugam,
Sensî, relicta non bene parmula*^a:

“ With thee I saw Philippis’ field,
“ And there I left my fame and shield.”

But, in a compliment to MÆCENAS, the same poet deli-

^a See Observations on Epist. 2. Book 1. and on Epist. 3. Book 2.

^b Ode 7. lib. 2.

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cately touches again upon his own want of bravery, in so genteel and so artful a manner, that if the worst infirmity of nature can find pardon, or alleviation, the lines plead elegantly in its favour, especially as they insinuate, that HORACE, coward as he was, could die fighting under the banner of his patron.

*Roges, tuum labore quid juvem meo,
Imbellis ac firmus parum?
Comes minore sum futurus in metu,
Qui major absentes habet:
Ut assidens implumibus pullis avis
Serpentium allapsus timet
Magis reliētis; non, ut adfit, auxilii
Latura plus presentibus.
Libenter hoc et omne militabitur
Bellum in tuae spem gratia.*

“ You ask, what services, what great exploits,
“ You can expect from me; a feeble man,
“ By nature fearful, and unfit for arms?
“ None, my MÆCENAS, none: but yet, I would escape
“ Those fears, which absence oft creates: and like
“ The helpless bird, that finds from watching greater ease,
“ Tho’ still unable to defend her young
“ From the dread serpent’s maw; so I, methinks,
“ Would hover near you wherefoe’er you go,
“ And with you share the dangers of the war.”

But now let us return to the two orators, ÆSCHINES and DEMOSTHENES. It is observable, if we may judge by their famous speeches *de Coronâ*, that politeness and good manners, at least what we place under that denomination, were in no way essential in the Grecian art of eloquence. Both the antagonists use most opprobrious language towards each other. They scold, in imitation of HOMER’s deities, like gods, and not like gentlemen: and certainly the Greek tongue, in which one word comprehends more than ten in English, is the properest dialect in the world for terms of reproach. Γραμματικόν φων ᾤ signifies, *a person, who stoops*

° Ep. 1. l. 15.

ᾤ DEMOSTHENES gives this appellation to ÆSCHINES in derision of his having been a schoolmaster. He likewise calls him *skulking buskin*, because he had been a player.

in the shoulders, by having carried a dask upon his back. Besides, compound words are better adapted to deliberate rage and indignation, than the trifling, inderivative monosyllables, that with us denote fools, knaves, and dogs. We are obliged, therefore, to enforce our invectives with various oaths and curses, in order to fill our mouths properly, and to give a sonorous dignity to our resentment.

The orations, thus heated at by *PLINY*, one in opposition, the other in defence of *CRETIUS*'s decree, were the produce of four years labour, and drew to *Athens* a prodigious concourse of learned men. But the orations, and all circumstances relating to the two orators, who spoke them, are so fully known, and have been so much enlarged upon, by numerous authors, that any farther mention of them, in this place, is needless.

E P I S T L E VI.

PLINY to JULIUS NASSO.

THEY tell me, my *Tuscan* farms have been much shattered by storms of hail. My estate beyond the *Po* has yielded grain in abundance; but then from the low price it bears I receive but little profit from it. My *Laurentinum* only makes me any return. Indeed, I have no possessions there, except a house and garden; all the lands I have about them are barren: nevertheless, from thence my profit solely arises; for there I write much, and, instead of cultivating lands, which I have not, I cultivate myself; and, as in other places, I can shew you a well filled granary, so here you shall see a storehouse of manuscripts. If, therefore, you also have a mind to enjoy a sure and prolific crop, sow something upon the same shore. Farewell,

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

Comum was the estate, which *PLINY* speaks of, beyond the *Po*. After his father's death, it fell into the possession of his

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

his mother, or, as we express it, was her jointure. In two or three preceding epistles, he describes it as a beautiful place; but in a letter to VALERIANUS¹, he complains of the situation; and probably for the reason here assigned, the cheapness which every sort of grain bore in that part of the *Milaneze*. Under these vexatious circumstances, our author wraps himself up in the philosophic contentment, which study and the liberal arts afford. What glorious contemplations must arise, in a breast like PLINY'S, devoid of all those corrosive cares, and that ceaseless anxiety, which covetous and worldly inclinations inspire; and yet so prudent in conduct and oeconomy, as to live free from debts, and the many irksome incumbrances, which studious and abstracted men often bring upon themselves! The medium between supine negligence, and unnecessary sollicitude, is so narrow a path, that few people can walk in it, without treading awry, and inclining to one side, or the other. We are apt to love money too wisely, or to despise it too foolishly; not considering, that profuseness is a rock, no less dangerous to split upon, than avarice.

¹ Book 2. Ep. 15.

EPISTLE VII.

PLINY to LEPIDUS.

I Often tell you, that REGULUS is a man of spirit. It is amazing, how effectually he accomplishes whatever he has set his heart upon. He was pleased to mourn for his son: no man ever mourned like him: his fancy led him to employ all the shops in *Rome*, to make numberless statues and images of this youth; who was represented in colours, in wax, in brass, in silver, in gold, in ivory, in marble: and he himself lately recited a treatise on his life, to a large audience assembled for that purpose. The treatise he recited was only an abstract of his son's life: yet he had a thousand copies of it transcribed, which he sent throughout all *Italy*, and the provinces. He wrote

wrote, in a public manner, to the *Decurions*^a, that one out of their number, a person, who had the best voice, should be chosen to read it to the people; which was done.

Had he adapted this spirit, or given any other name to our efforts in obtaining whatever we wish, to better purposes, of what infinite benefit might he have been to the world? Although, indeed, this spirit is seldom so vigorous in good, as in bad men; and as ignorance inspires boldness, and reason incites timidity, so a right turned mind is enfeebled by modesty; but a perverse disposition fortified by impudence: of which REGULUS is an example; weak lungs, a confused countenance, a stammering tongue, a dull invention, no memory; in short, nothing but a wild, frantic genius; and yet it so happens, that from his impudence, nay from his very wildness, he is looked upon by many people as an orator. Therefore CATO's apophthegm^b upon an orator was admirably turned, by HERENNIUS SENECIO, against REGULUS: "An orator is a bad man, unskilled in speaking." In truth, CATO did not describe a true orator, so well as this saying describes REGULUS.

Have you any equivalent to send me for such an epistle as this? Yes, you have, if you write me word that some of my old companions, your fellow-citizens, or that you yourself, have read in the *Forum*, mountebank-like, this doleful performance of REGULUS; raising, as DEMOSTHENES says, "your voice most merrily, and straining every muscle in your throat." For so absurd is the performance, that it will sooner incite laughter than sorrow. You will rather imagine a child the author, than the subject of the book. Farewell.

^a Of each province.

^b CATO's definition of an orator was, *Orator est vir bonus, dicendi peritus*: "An orator is a good man, skilful in speaking." See QUINTILIAN, Book 12. Chap. 1.

OBSERVATIONS.

REGULUS again! his mourning for his son again turned into ridicule and merriment! Here PLINY stands in greater need of defence than REGULUS: nor can any more be said on his behalf than what has been already hinted, that the provocations and the injuries he received from his brother orator, during the reign of DOMITIAN, were too great to be ever forgotten. But how poor is his wit, how false his reasoning in this epistle! Or suppose the one as bright, and the other as just, as his own prejudiced mind could desire, how ungenerous, how inhuman an action is it, to insult a parent, be his private character what it will, for endeavouring to preserve the fame, and eternize the reputation of his only son? To comfort the afflicted, to quiet envy, to conquer prejudice, and to obliterate revenge, are social virtues, which PLINY would have exerted towards any other man, or upon any other occasion: but the very name of REGULUS seems to set him on fire, and to consume, for a time, even the appearance of his real disposition.

Benevolence, generosity, and compassion were the true characteristics of our author's temper: whence then this sudden eruption of the opposite vices? Not so much, I imagine, from revenge as envy. REGULUS, though wicked, infamous, and abandoned in many instances, made a considerable figure as a lawyer. His knowledge and capacity were undoubtedly great. He was generally in opposition to our author, and perhaps was often attended to with applause. It may be presumed therefore, that the severity, shewn by PLINY to every action of his enemy's life, proceeds from that false imagination, too prevalent in the world, that our own pretensions to merit receive an entire sanction, from the darkness we endeavour to spread over the illustrious good qualities of our competitors. We meet with daily instances of this erroneous notion in both sexes. The ladies can bear no rivals in beauty, the men no rivals in wit. The sorrow, which REGULUS discovered for his son, is by no means to be looked upon as insincere; nor is the regard, he paid to the youth's memory, either to be laughed at, or dispraised. If we may believe MARTIAL, he had great reason to bewail the loss of a son, whose very infancy promised wonders. The epigram on that occasion may serve to conclude the observations upon this inveterate epistle.

Adspicis

*Adspicis ut parvus, nec adhuc trieteride plend,
 REGULUS auditum laudet et ipse patrem ;
 Maternoque sinus, viso genitore, relinquat,
 Et patrias laudes sentiat esse suas.
 Jam clamor, centumque viri, densumque corona
 Vultus, et infanti Julia testæ placent.
 Acris equi saboles magno sic pulvere gaudet ;
 Sic vitulus mollia prælia fronte cupit.
 Di, servate, precor, matri sua vota, patrique,
 Audiat ut natum REGULUS, illa duos *.*

Whilst REGULUS, with nicest art,
 Pleads his victorious client's cause ;
 See his young image bear a part,
 And join in the deserv'd applause !

How eager, when his fire comes forth,
 We see him from his mother run,
 As tho' he knew, the father's worth
 Reflected honour on the son.

The spacious hall his eye surveys,
 The court, and crowds, that press to hear ;
 The shouts, that speak his father's praise,
 Already charm his infant ear.

So youthful coursfers paw the ground,
 Impatient for the future race ;
 So wanton heifers aim a wound,
 Ere sprouting horns their forehead grace.

All ye powers immortal ! crown
 With just success each parent's vows !
 Long live the sire, to hear his son ;
 The mother, both her son, and spouse.

* MARTIAL. Lib. 6. Ep. 38. De filio REGULI.

EPISTLE VIII.

PLINY to *ARRIANUS*.

YOU congratulate me upon being invested with the augurship. You are in the right. First, it is an honour, to meet with the approbation of our most renowned emperor, even in affairs of the least consequence : and then again, this priesthood is not only an antient and sacred office, but the more conspicuous and venerable, because held for life. For other sacerdotal offices, though they are almost equal in dignity ; yet, as they are bestowed one day, so may they be taken away the next. This alone is not in the power of fortune, except in the first gift of it. But your compliments appear to me particularly agreeable, as I have succeeded *JULIUS FRONTINUS*, a very great man, and one, who for many years together constantly named me among those priests upon the returning day of nomination, as if he would have adopted me into his place. But the event has now happened in such a manner, as not to make it seem the work of chance. The chief pleasure, that arises to you, as you say, from my new dignity, is, that *MARCUS TULLIUS* was an augur. You are glad, that I should succeed in honours a person, whom I desire to emulate in studies. However, I cannot avoid wishing, that as I have arrived younger than he, to the sacerdotal, and consular dignities ; so I may, in some degree, when I am old, rival him in dignity of genius. What is in the gift of men indeed may fall to the lot of me, and many others. But, as it is difficult to reach, so it is presumptuous to hope for what is in the gift of heaven alone. Farewell.

OBSER.

OBSERVATIONS.

Mankind is naturally superstitious. We have been so from the original of the world, and are likely to continue so to the end of it: *superstitio fusa per gentes oppressit omnium ferè animos, atque hominum imbecillitatem occupavit*: “ Superstition, “ when once diffused through the world, oppressed the souls “ of almost the whole human race, and fixed itself upon “ the weakness of our nature,” says TULLY in his second book *de Divinatione* ^d: but it is difficult to give any clear and satisfactory definition of superstition: authors are not agreed from whence the word is to be derived. The *Greek* word *Δεισιδαιμονία*, which we translate “ superstition,” signifies only the fear of the Deity; but the word itself is *Latin*, and, according to the great orator, just now quoted, “ those “ were called superstitious, who prayed and sacrificed whole “ days, that their children might outlive them: but the “ word, says he, was afterwards used in a larger accepta- “ tion.” ^e Other authors give other definitions of it; but now, and indeed for many ages, it seems, in the common acceptance, to signify a frivolous and groundless apprehension of the Deity; which apprehension produces many idle, if not wicked practices; such as, in the judgement of wise and dispassionate men, must be needless, and some of them rather offensive, than pleasing to the supreme Being. From this account of the common notion of superstition it is plain, that what one man thinks superstition, another thinks a necessary part of religion; what one holds to be displeasing, another judges to be acceptable to God: and it is no wonder we differ so widely in matters of the utmost importance, when our opinions are as various, and as zealous, in trifles, that neither concern our happiness on this, nor on the other side of the grave. But whatever allowance may be made to weak minds in the practice of lesser degrees of superstition, for which, perhaps, they are rather to be pitied, than condemned; yet when this idolatrous kind of worship grows outrageous, and puts men upon actions pernicious to their

^d Page 262.

^e De naturâ deorum, book 2. c. 28. Qui totos dies precabantur et immolabant, ut sui liberi sibi superstites essent, superstitiosi sunt appellati: quod nomen postea latius patuit.

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fellow-creatures, who does not join in opinion with PLUTARCH [†], and lord BACON [‡], that it is worse than atheism? For example, what can be more shocking, than those religious practices among the heathens, of appeasing their deities by human sacrifices?

*Mos fuit in populis, quos condidit advena Dido,
Pescere caede deos veniam, ac flagrantibus aris
(Infandum dictu) parvos imponere natos* [§].

“ Where DIDO settled, long a law had stood
“ Amongst the people to appease with blood
“ The pow'rs incens'd; and there the fire survey'd
“ The son, his hands had on the altar laid.

And PLINY [†] the elder tells us, that so late only as the six hundred and fifty seventh year of Rome, the senate passed a decree, forbidding human sacrifice: his words are, DCLVII domum anno urbis CN. CORNELIO LENTULO, P. LICINIO CRASSO *coff. senatusconsultum factum est, ne homo immolaretur; palamque in tempus illud sacra prodigiosa celebrata*: “ In the year of Rome six hundred and fifty seven, in the consulship of LENTULUS and CRASSUS, an order of senate was established, to prevent homicide, and those astonishing religious rites, which were openly celebrated in that age.” We find too, from antient authors, that the barbarous combats of gladiators were originally instituted at funerals, for the propitiation of departed souls, by the effusion of human blood. ROSINUS [‡], in his chapter *de ludis funebribus et gladiatoriiis*, has this among other quotations from TERTULLIAN, *nam olim, quoniam animas defunctorum humano sanguine propitiari creditum est, captivos, vel malo ingenio servos mercati, in exequiis immolabant*: “ For formerly, because it was an opinion, that the souls of the deceased were appeased by human blood, those who had bought captives, or slaves of bad dispositions, sacrificed them at funeral rites.” And the Psalmist, speaking of the idolatry,

[†] PLUTARCH. *περὶ διασποράς*, vol. ii. p. 164.

[‡] BACON's essay on superstition.

[§] SILIUS ITALICUS, lib. 4.

[†] PLIN. Nat. Hist. book 30. chap. 1.

[‡] Lib. 5. cap. 24.

tries,

tries, which the children of *Israel* learned from the heathens, says, they were mingled among the heathen, and learned their works; insomuch that they worshipped their idols, which turned to their own decay; yea, they offered their sons and their daughters unto devils, and shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and their daughters, whom they offered unto the idols of Canaan, and the land was defiled with blood¹. These inhuman practices have been condemned in outward profession by Christians of all denominations. But it is undeniably too true, that the notions of religion, entertained by some Christians, have led them into practices no less barbarous: and, what is still more melancholy and unaccountable, they have endeavoured to found those notions upon the principles of Christianity; whose precepts, throughout the whole New Testament, appear plainly calculated for the promotion of mildness, humanity, charity, affection, and good-nature. A Christian, therefore, must disgrace his profession, if he pays too much reverence to external rites and ceremonies, which are not made necessary by the commandment of CHRIST. He is likewise equally blameable, if he suffer himself to be led by such a spirit of persecution, as to think himself obliged to use violence for the propagation of his religion, or to make his fellow-creatures, who differ from him in religious sentiments, miserable in this world, in order to make them happy in the next. But whilst these superstitious tenets are utterly to be condemned, as productive of very unhappy effects to mankind, we ought also to censure that other latitudinarian extreme, which allows a pernicious liberty of venting the most wicked and blasphemous opinions, and countenances the most indecent, and even irreverent behaviour towards the Deity. How highly then is the doctrine and discipline of the Church of *England* to be approved; for, with great wisdom, she has chosen the middle way between the *Papist* and the *Puritan*; between the foppery of the one, and the clownishness of the other; between the folly of those, who press the use of too many, and often ridiculous ceremonies, and the irreverence of those, who forbid the use of any.

Into what a length of thought have I been betrayed by superstition! the idea of which was not possibly to be separated from the augurate, spoken of by *PLINY* in this

¹ Psalm cvi. v. 35.

epistle: but if I have wandered too far out of my road, merely to attack giants and monsters, that infect our islands, this excuse, I hope, may be allowed in favour of my knight-errantry, that it was in defence of the manners and religion of my country; a cause, in which puffanimity or lukewarmness would be irreparably shameful.

To return to the idolatry that prevailed at Rome in PLINY'S time. The augurs were a set of priests, instituted by NUMA. *Augures, ROMULO regnante, nati erant: ab NUMA POMPILIO creati*: "There were no augurs during the reign of ROMULUS: they were created by NUMA POMPILIUS." Their priesthood was for life; a circumstance which, PLINY seems to think, rendered the office holy: *tum hoc quoque sacrum plane et insigne est, quod non admittitur viventi*: "This circumstance is avowedly sacred, and very extraordinary, that the office of augur is for life." It was happy for the priests, that their ordination was held so sacred, as not to be reversed; especially as they were obliged to expound omens, prodigies, and dreams; which, if not expounded to the will and inclination of great men, might have proved of fatal consequence to the expositors. I am pleased to find, that PLINY takes no notice of the superstitious duties of the office. He knew them to be ridiculous and delusive; and therefore he looks upon the augurship as an honour, because it was bestowed only upon persons of the first rank in character and station^m: and he esteems it sacred, because the augurs were appointed and revered as the ministers of heaven. They were originally three in number, then four, and, lastly, fifteen.

^m Tantæ autoritatis, ut nihil magni in republicâ fieret inaugurato. Ad viros sapientiâ et nobilitate præcellentes sacerdotium illud præferbatur. KIPPINGI Antiquitat. Romanarum, lib. 1. cap. 12.

EPISTLE IX.

PLINY to URSUS.

FOR some days past JULIUS BASSUS has been upon his defence in the senate; a pains-taking man, made famous by his misfortunes. He was accused,

cused, during the government of VESPASIAN, by two private men; and his cause being remitted to the senate, it remained there a long time. At length he was fully justified and acquitted. Under the reign of TITUS he lived in terror, as he was the friend of DOMITIAN; and yet he was banished by DOMITIAN, recalled by NERVA, and having obtained the government of *Bithynia*, he returned under an accusation. Nor was he more severely prosecuted, than faithfully defended. The senators gave various opinions of him: most of them, however, of the mildest kind. POMPONIUS RUFUS, a ready and impetuous speaker, opened the accusation. He was seconded by THEOPHANES, one of the deputies, who was the chief incendiary, and indeed the original cause of this prosecution. I answered; having been enjoined by BASSUS to lay the foundations of his whole defence; to give an account of all his honours, which were great, both from the splendor of his ancestors, and his own dangers; to speak of the conspiracy of the informers^a, who had their own private gain in view; to lay open the causes, by which he had offended the most factious among them, particularly THEOPHANES himself. He was likewise desirous, that I would set myself to clear him of that crime which pressed him closest: for as to other complaints, though they sounded more loudly, yet he did not only merit pardon, but applause. This charge lay hardest upon him, that, in an undesigned simplicity of heart, he was unguarded enough to receive, as a token of their friendship, certain presents from the people of his province; which was nothing extraordinary, since he had been their questor. These presents were termed thefts and plunder by his accusers; he called them gifts. But then he could not lawfully receive any gifts. Here what was I to do?

^a The informers were entitled to a fourth part of every confiscation.

What

What road was I to take in the defence? Was I to deny a fact? I dreaded, lest it should plainly appear a theft, because I was afraid to confess it; besides, to deny a manifest act, was to aggravate, not to lessen the crime; especially when the accused person himself had utterly deprived his advocates of such a plea: for he had acknowledged to many persons, and even to the emperor, that he had received upon his birthday, or at the *Saturnalia*, some small presents, and had likewise sent some to many of his friends. Should I have recourse to the clemency of his judges? That was putting a knife to his throat, by granting he had offended in such a manner, as to need a public pardon. Was I to defend the action as right? I should then have done him no service, and have dishonoured myself. In this difficulty, I thought it best to keep the middle road. I believe I have done it. My pleading was interrupted, as battles sometimes are, by the night. I spoke three hours and an half: an hour and an half still remained; for, as the law allowed the accuser six hours, the accused had nine; and he had divided that time between me and the person, who was to speak after me; so that I was to have five hours, and he the rest. The visible success of my pleading persuaded me to put an end to my discourse in the manner I did. For it is rash not to be content, when things are in a prosperous way. Add to this, I was afraid, lest, by a renewal of my labour, my strength might fail me; since it was more difficult to take up the thread of my speech, than to continue speaking. There was danger too, that my pleadings might appear languid, if discontinued, and tedious, if reassumed. For as torches, by a continual motion, preserve their flame, but with difficulty recover it, when extinguished; so the warmth of the speaker, and the attention of the hearer, are kept up by continuance, but languish by any interval, or remission. But BASSUS, with many pray-

ers,

ers, even almost with tears, entreated me to fill up my time. I obeyed, and preferred his interest to my own. It succeeded well. I found the minds of the senate so full of expectation, and so fresh, that they seemed more eager to hear my future, than to have been satiated by my former pleading. **LUCIUS ALBINUS** spoke after me, so properly, that our speeches, which were thought to contain the variety of two, were so well connected, that they seemed to form one continued discourse. **HERENNIUS POLLIO** replied with force and dignity. **THEOPHANES** then spoke again; which he did, as he does every thing, with the greatest impudence; because after two consular and eloquent men had finished, he demanded more time, than is commonly allowed. He held out till night, even till lights were brought in. The next day, **HOMULUS** and **FRONTO** pleaded for **BASSUS**; incomparably well. The proofs took up the fourth day. **BÆBIUS MACER**, consul elect, was of opinion, that **BASSUS** was guilty of a breach of the law against bribery; **CÆPIO HISPO**, that, without infringement upon the dignity of the senate, they might appoint judges to try his offence. Both were in the right. You ask, how can that be, since their opinions were so widely different? Because it was reasonable for **MACER**, who only considered the letter of the law, to condemn that man, who received presents, contrary to the law; and **CÆPIO**, because he imagined it lawful for the senate, as it certainly was, to mitigate, and superintend the laws, thought it very reasonable, that they might pardon a fact, which, though indeed forbidden, was, nevertheless, often committed. The opinion of **CÆPIO** prevailed: nay, when he rose to deliver his opinion, as great acclamations were given him, as attend others, when they sit down. From whence you may conclude, with how unanimous a consent his motion was received, when he had made it, since it met with so much favour before

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before hand. However, the judgements of people are divided into two parties, not only in the senate, but in the city. Those, who think the opinion of CÆPIO right, condemn the proposition of MACER; as too rigid and severe: those, again, who side with MACER, call the determination of CÆPIO not only too easy, but even an inconsistent decree; for they absolutely deny, that a person, who is to be tried by the ordinary judges, should be suffered to remain in the senate. There was likewise a third opinion. VALERIUS PAULINUS, being of the same sentiments with CÆPIO, added this farther, that they should inform against THEOPHANES, as soon as his deputation expired. For he charged him with many things, in the course of the prosecution, that were within the very law, by virtue of which he had accused BASSUS. But the consuls, although the greatest part of the senate approved of the opinion, did not come into it. However, PAULINUS had all the honour, which so honest and so equitable a motion deserved. When the senate was dismissed, BASSUS was received by a numerous concourse of people, with great acclamations and great joy. A name made famous by misfortunes, which were called to remembrance by the danger he had just escaped, together with a settled melancholy, and broken old-age united in a graceful person, had rendered him acceptable in all eyes. Keep this letter, as the forerunner of another; for I know you will expect the full and entire oration*; and I fear you may long expect it; for the revival of a speech, upon an affair of so great consequence, must not be light and cursory. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The forms of these trials before the senate, or other Roman judges, appear in so many different lights, that it is dif-

* In defence of JUL. BASSUS.

ficult to say, in what method the proceedings were carried on. The accusation was verbal only. If the person accused was silent, or confessed his guilt, he was condemned; but if he denied the crime, his name was set down among those, who stood accused, and the substance of the accusation was reduced into writing, and a day of trial appointed.

In reading over epistles upon these topics, it is natural to consider the variations between the Roman usages and our own. In the trial of BASSUS two most remarkable differences occur to our notice. The first is, that the council for the accused ended the debate; the second, that all the council for and against the accused, argued before the proofs were read. The contrary practice prevails with us. In civil causes, the council for the complainant, and in criminal causes, the council for the king, always end the debate; which is called, *Having the right to reply*: nor do the council ever argue till the proofs are read. Our usage is certainly founded upon reason. The judges ought to be apprized of the facts; otherwise how can they judge of the arguments arising from those facts? It will be needless to shew, how much the English customs are preferable to the Roman, in these two particular points: we may rest satisfied, that our constitution, in general, is the best in the world: so very excellent, perhaps, that, like our religion, it can be admired in theory only, but will scarce ever be kept up to its practice.

Dixit in noctem, atque etiam nocte, illatis lucernis: "He spoke till night, and even after the candles were brought in." No pleadings lasted longer than day-light. PLINY, in the eleventh epistle of the second book, expressly says, *Neque enim jam inchoari poterat actio, nisi ut noctis intervantu scinderetur*: "Nor could the pleadings have been carried on, unless, by the approach of night, they had been referred to another day." So that the lights, which were brought into the senate-house, were not brought thither, that THEOPHANES might continue his argument, but to give light to the assembly, as they went away.

CÆPIO HISPO, *salvâ dignitate, judices dandos*. The full meaning of this sentence is very hard to be ascertained. We are left, as in many other epistles, to guess, at random, the particular law, or custom, to which PLINY alludes. *Salvâ dignitate* certainly refers to the senate, who were not to descend to any decree, or resolution, below their dignity. In the

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the eleventh epistle of the first book there is an expression of this kind, relating to MARIUS PRISCUS. *Omissâ defensione, judices petiit.* It is explained in the manner, that seemed the most probable sense of that epistle. But here the *judices dandos* may bear another interpretation. Let us consider the following expression. *Negant enim congruens esse, retinere in senatu, cui judices dederis :* "For they say, that it is inconsistent, that those, who had submitted to the scrutiny of judges, should remain in the senate." We may from hence imagine, that senators, when tried by the senate, were sometimes sent down to inferior courts, without receiving sentence from their own body : and, in that case, it was thought improper, that those persons, to whom this kind of mercy had been shewn, should sit again in their places as senators, because they had subjected themselves to an inferior jurisdiction. Thus BASSUS had so manifestly offended against a positive law, that he must have been condemned by the senate, if they had proceeded to a definitive sentence; but a lower court of judicature, such as the *Decemviri*, or *Centumviri stitibus judicandis*, might soften the punishment, or might determine the presents, which BASSUS had received, to have been gifts of custom, not tokens of bribery.

• The *Julia lex, de pecuniis repetundis*, particularly levelled against the misdemeanors of provincial governors.

EPISTLE X.

PLINY to SABINUS.

YOU write me word, that SABINA, who made us her heirs, has not, by any express clause of her will, ordered her slave MODESTUS to be free, and yet has left him a legacy in these words, "I give to MODESTUS, &c. whom I commanded should be free." You ask my opinion upon this matter ? I have consulted the most eminent lawyers : they all agree, that he neither is entitled to his liberty, because it was not actually given, nor to his legacy, because she left it to a slave. But to me this appears

† A slave was incapable of inheritance : whatever was left to a slave belonged to his master.

a manifest

a manifest error : and therefore I think we ought to act, as if she had ordered it in exprefs terms ; because she imagined she had fo done. I am confident you will be of my opinion, fince you never failed, in the moft religious manner, to fulfil the will of the dead, which good heirs always underftand as a law. In this our honour is concerned, which has not lefs weight with you and me, than a legal neceffity with others. Let us permit him, therefore, to have his liberty. Let him enjoy his legacy, as if she had taken all proper fteps in his favour. By a right choice of executors, all proper fteps are taken. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This is the counterpart of the fixteenth epiftle in the fecond book. PLINY will not in the leaft recede from that glorious law, (*propriam quandam legem*) which he had laid down to himfelf, in relation to the will of the dead. But, in the cafe of MODESTUS, it was impoffible for him to act in the manner he intended, without the full confent and approbation of SABINUS, who, by SABINA's will, was appointed joint heir with our author. This epiftle is written with a view to gain his colleague's confent ; and the method he takes, to obtain his generous purpofe, fhews an infinite deal of that honeft fkill and artifice, which are abfolutely neceffary in the currency of bufinefs with mankind. He begins by finding fault with the determinations of the lawyers, whofe opinions turned upon the literal fenfe, not upon the real intentions, of SABINA's will : and from thence he argues, that her heir ought to act, as if the due forms of law had been executed ; becaufe the lady herfelf imagined, that she had done every thing neceffary to give MODESTUS his liberty. He then puts SABINUS in mind of his former behaviour, in executing the wills of thofe perfons, to whom he had been left heir ; and infifts, that a good heir, or, in other words, a juft and upright man, will fulfil the intention of the deceased as minutely, as if it had been expreffed in fuch a legal manner, that the law would enforce the execution. He feems to have a perfect confidence, that

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that SABINUS will concur with these sentiments: for honesty, continues our author, has as full power over us, as the laws have over other people. This was a kind of compliment, which SABINUS could not contradict, without denying himself capable of so virtuous an action: and therefore he is obliged, whether he will or not, to act conformably to PLINY'S inclinations; who concludes his letter, by still giving a more enticing reason for the joint-heir's compliance, in these words: *Cavit enim quæ hæredes bene elegit*: "SABINA had been much more cautious and circumspect in drawing, and wording her will, had not she supplied any imperfection of that kind, by appointing men of honour for her heirs."

The two common methods among the *Romans* of giving liberty to their slaves were by testament, or manumission. The words used in both these ceremonies were, *Hunc hominem liberum esse volo*. The defect of these words occasioned the doubt on that part of SABINA'S will, which was in favour of MODESTUS. But I fear the examples have been few, where heirs or executors have imitated PLINY, by preferring equity and justice to the nice distinctions and minute formalities of the law.

EPISTLE XI.

PLINY to CORNELIUS MINUTIANUS.

HAVE you heard that VALERIUS LICINIANUS has set up a school in *Sicily*? I believe you have not heard it, for the news is fresh. He, who lately of prætorian dignity was accounted one of the best pleaders in *Rome*, is now fallen so low, as, from a senator, to become an exile; from an orator, a teacher of rhetoric: insomuch that he himself, at the opening of his school, said with a sorrowful and solemn countenance, "O fortune! what sport dost thou make to thyself? Thou makest senators of schoolmasters, and schoolmasters of senators." In which expression there is so much gall and bitterness, that I could almost fancy he set up a school merely to

to have an opportunity of saying it. Again, when he made his first appearance in school, in a Grecian dress, (for those, who are under sentence of banishment, have no right to wear the Roman gown,) after he was a little composed, and had surveyed his habit, " I am, however, says he, to declaim in *Latin*."

These, you will say, are melancholy and moving stories. Yet he, who, by the crime of incest, could bring such a scandal upon his profession, certainly deserved his sentence. It is true, he confessed the incest; but then it is uncertain, whether that confession proceeded from guilt, or from fear of greater punishment, if he had denied it. For DOMITIAN was in a very great rage; and that rage was still encreased by the want of sufficient evidence to support that horrible sentence he was determined to give. And when the emperor resolved that CORNELIA, *chief of the vestal virgins**, should be buried alive, as thinking to make his reign illustrious by such an example^b, he summoned, by authority as high-priest, or, rather, by his tyrannic disposition, and the wantonness of an absolute prince, the chief priests to meet together, not in the pontifical college, but at his country-seat at *Alba*; where, with a crime equal to that which he seemed to punish, without citing her to appear, or giving her leave to speak in her own defence, he condemned her of incest; although he himself had not only been guilty of the same crime with his brother's daughter, but had also been the occasion of her death; for she died of abortion in her widowhood.

* In the *Oxford* edition of PLINY's Epistles, this sentence stands thus, CORNELIAM MAXIMILLAM VESTALEM; in the edition by LONGOLIUS, which is here followed, CORNELIAM VESTALIUM MAXIMAM. This last reading seems preferable, because CORNELIA says, she performed the sacrifice on the day when DOMITIAN triumphed; and it may be presumed, the chief priests officiated on so joyful and so solemn an occasion.

^b Of severity.

The chief-priests were immediately sent to see the sentence against CORNELIA put into execution. She, at one time invoking VESTA, and then appealing to the rest of the gods, among other exclamations, frequently repeated this in particular: "CÆSAR thinks I am guilty of incest; I, who performed the sacred rites when he conquered and triumphed." Whether she meant this by way of flattery, or derision, from a consciousness of her own innocence, or a contempt of the emperor, is uncertain. She continued crying out in this manner, till she was brought to the place of execution: whether guilty, or otherwise, I cannot tell; certainly she was treated as a criminal. As they were letting her down into the cavern, her robe happened to catch hold of something, that hindered her descent; upon which she turned about, and disentangled it; and when the executioner would have assisted her with his hand, she drew herself back with horror; refusing to be touched by him, as a defilement to her pure and unspotted chastity: still preserving the appearance of sanctity to the last moment; and, among all the other instances of her modesty,

She took great care to fall with decency*.

Besides, CELER, the Roman knight, who was accused of having had criminal conversation with her, while they were scourging him with rods in the forum, persisted in this cry, "What crime have I committed? I

* Here the *Quarto* edition of PLINY'S Epistles differ from all the rest. The words, according to LONGOLIUS, are, *Certe tanquam innocens ducta est*; which the editor explains by saying, The people looked upon her as innocent. But the word *nocens* (which I have followed, according to the *Variorum*, the *Oxford*, and the other editions) seems more agreeable to the tenor of the epistle. "Whether she was innocent, or otherwise, (says PLINY) I shall not determine: certainly she was treated as guilty."

† A verse in the *Hecuba* of EURIPIDES, Line 567.

"have

“ have committed none.” So that DOMITIAN, being in the utmost rage at lying under the infamy of so much cruelty and injustice, seizes LICINIANUS for having concealed, in one of his farms, a freed-woman belonging to CORNELIA. He was advised by those, to whose custody he was committed, if he had a mind to escape punishment, to confess the fact, as a certain means of obtaining pardon. He did so. HERENNIUS SENECIO spoke for him, in his absence, much in the words of HOMER,

PATROCLUS is fallen !

for he said, “ Instead of an advocate, I am become a messenger of news. LICINIANUS has withdrawn himself.” This was so very agreeable to DOMITIAN, that he could not forbear discovering publicly his joy, and saying, “ LICINIANUS has cleared us.” He added also, that the criminal ought not to be too much oppressed, since he has owned his guilt ; and he allowed him to convey away all of his effects, which he could get together, before they were confiscated ; and, as a reward, allotted him a commodious place of exile ; from whence, by the clemency of the emperor NERVA, he was afterwards removed into *Sicily*, where he now has set up a school, and takes revenge upon fortune by his declamations.

You see how readily I obey you, in sending you not only the city news, but all that comes from abroad ; and so minutely, as to trace every incident from its beginning : And indeed I imagined, as you were absent at that time, you might have heard nothing more of LICINIANUS, than that he was banished for incest ; for report acquaints us only with the substance of things, without particulars. I deserve, in my turn, an account from you of every transaction

* Iliad xviii. v. 20.

in your town and neighbourhood, where something remarkable often happens. In short, you may write to me what you please, provided your letter be as long as mine; for I shall not only count the pages, but the lines and syllables. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This epistle sets forth to us one of the many instances, shocking to human nature, of DOMITIAN's cruelty. SUTTONIUS says, that the prosecution of CORNELIA was revived by that emperor a considerable time after she had been tried and acquitted. His words are, CORNELIAM virginem maximam absolutam olim debinc longo intervallo repetitam atque convictam desodi imperavit¹: "He ordered CORNELIA, the chief of the vestals, formerly acquitted, and afterwards brought forth and convicted, to be buried alive." This circumstance, although omitted by PLINY, because the epistle is, probably, written to a person well acquainted with that particular, renders the prosecution more sanguinary, and heightens the Vestal's distress: for surely it was unfortunate, to have escaped a NERO, only to fall by a DOMITIAN.

Absentem inauditamque damnavit incesti: "Absent and unheard as she was, he condemned her of incest." By what law, or by what precedent, the tyrant proceeded in the condemnation of CORNELIA, does not appear. *Licentia domini* seems to have been the rule of his government. But, in the time of NERO, we find, that the Romans were particularly cautious of putting any person to death, without sufficient proof and a full hearing. Οὐκ ἔστι τοῦ Ρωμαίοις χαρίζεσθαι τινα ἀνθρώπου εἰς ἀπάλειαν, πρὶν ἢ ὁ κατηγορούμενος κατὰ πρόσωπον ἔχοι τὰς κατηγορίας, τόπον τε ἀπολογίας λάβοι περὶ τῶ ἐγκλήματος². We may learn

¹ SUTTON. *Domitian*. cap. 8. Here the lady is called CORNELIAM MAXIMAM. TACITUS tells us, she was of the *Coffian* family: CORNELIA *ex familiâ Cofforum*. TACIT. *Annal.* 15.

² ACTS, chap. xxv. v. 16. *It is not the manner of the Romans, to deliver any man to die before that he, which is accused, have the accusers face to face, and have licence to answer for himself, concerning the crime laid against him.*

from hence, by what large strides tyranny makes its way to uncontrollable power. In the reign of NERO some kind of justice was still preserved. Accusers, although false, were brought before the accused, who had leave to speak and to defend themselves, with all their force of eloquence, or of innocence. But in the reign of DOMITIAN, even the parade of equity disappeared, the shadow of justice vanished, and the footsteps of decency and humanity were obliterated, and sunk into destruction.

Blandiens hæc, an irridens, dubium est: "It is doubtful, " whether she said this to sooth, or to deride." The supposition of PLINY, that the words of CORNELIA were spoken in a flattering, or in a deriding manner, does not seem perfectly well grounded. Flattery and jesting were equally unseasonable at such a time; nor does the sentence import any thing more, than what is likely to have fallen from a person in her circumstances. It is a solemn protestation of her innocence, and an appeal to heaven for the truth of her assertion. The gods had crowned her vows with success, and given CÆSAR a victorious triumph. "Can it be imagined, " says she, that the all-righteous deities would have heard " my prayers, if I had performed the sacred rites with in- " cestuous hands?" This appears to be the genuine sense of CORNELIA's speech; and the inference, that she endeavours to draw of her own virtue, is extremely natural and unaffected. Her behaviour at the concluding scene of her life is great and decent. Her abhorrence of the touch of the executioner, and her care to gather her robe round her, and to die with the modesty she had lived, is highly becoming the character of a Vestal virgin. The subject matter of the whole epistle is extremely curious, and, at the same time that it moves our pity towards CORNELIA, it raises our indignation against DOMITIAN.

E P I S T L E XII.

PLINY to A R R I A N U S.

YOU love EGNATIUS MARCELLINUS, and often commend him to me. You will love and commend him more, when you know what he has lately done. When he went questor to his province, the

secretary, who was allotted him, dying before the time that his salary became due, MARCELLINUS was of opinion, and thought it just, that the money, which he had taken to pay that secretary, ought not to remain in his hands. On his return, therefore, he first applied to the emperor, and afterwards, by the emperor's command, consulted the senate, how he should dispose of the salary. It was a question of little consequence, but still it was a question. The heirs of the secretary claimed it for themselves; the treasurers, for the exchequer. The cause was pleaded. The advocate for the heirs argued first; then the advocate for the people: both extremely well. CÆCILIUS STRABO was of opinion, that it should be paid into the treasury; BÆBIUS MACER, that it should be given to the heirs. STRABO prevailed.

Give MARCELLINUS his just praise, as I did, without hesitation. For although it has been amply sufficient for him, to find his action approved by the emperor and the senate, yet he will be much rejoiced to have your commendation. All those, who court glory and fame, are wonderfully delighted with the approbation, and praises, even of the lesser degrees of men: but MARCELLINUS reveres you in such a manner, that he will receive the highest satisfaction from your judgement. To this we may add, that if he knew, an account of his behaviour had travelled so far, he must necessarily be elated at the reach, swiftness, and progress of his fame. For, I know not the reason, the extent of their reputation pleases men more than even the real greatness of it. Farewell,

OBSERVATIONS.

The love of detraction is so general, I had almost said, so fashionable a vice, that we are really surprized to meet with a disposition entirely averse to envy and malevolence. This twelfth epistle is an example of that partiular species
of

of good-nature, which takes pleasure in praising every thing that has the least appearance of virtue: for surely our author must have felt great delight in setting off to advantage all good actions, when he commends MARCELLINUS for not keeping a sum of money, to which he had no sort of pretence. If he had kept it, he might probably have been punished for embezzling the public treasures. It is not impossible, that, at the time when this epistle was written, the questors, and other officers in power, who had opportunities of engrossing the public money, and converting it to their own use, generally yielded to the temptation, whenever it fell in their way. PLINY, therefore, thinks MARCELLINUS ought to receive encomiums, as he is distinguished, even by a negative virtue, from the iniquitous herd. But although an abstinence from evil has some resemblance to virtue, yet it is only the resemblance of a ghost to a body; an airy likeness without any solidity; the shadow without the substance.

The public officers, such as the *ædiles*, *prætors*, and *questors*, had each of them a secretary, who, during the time he exercised the profession of a scribe, was not permitted to the management of any employment in the state. It appears from this letter, that these scribes were paid at stated times of the year, and if they died before the day of payment, nothing could be demanded. The same is the case of our officers, who have yearly salaries; and with all other annuitants, where the payments are on any fixed days. But it would have been a much more laudable action in EGNATIUS, if he had made up to the heirs of the secretary the loss, they sustained by the senate's decree. And certainly it would have been no more than common equity in that venerable body, to have allowed to the representatives of this man, even to a day, the wages he had earned by his labour. From the whole tenor of PLINY's conduct, we need be under no difficulty to determine, in what manner he would have acted in such circumstances.

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

EPISTLE XIII.

PLINY to CORNELIUS TACITUS.

I Am extremely glad to hear you are come safe to town. Your arrival, though always desirable, is at this time more particularly welcome. I shall still stay some few days in *Tusculum*, that I may finish a small work ^a which I have in hand; for I am afraid, if I should now break off my pursuit, just when I have brought it near an end, I should find a difficulty in taking it up again. In the mean while, that I may lose no time, I write this precursory letter, to intimate a request, which I must urge personally when we meet. But first hear the reason of my asking, and then what it is I ask.

When I was last in my own country ¹, a son ² of one of my fellow citizens came to see me. I asked him, "Do you study?" He answered, "Yes:" "Where?" "At *Mediolanum* ¹;" "Why not here?" To which his father answered, (for his father was with him, and had introduced the youth to me) "Because we have no preceptors here." "Why have you not? for it much concerns you who are fathers," (and many parents happened luckily to be present) "to have your sons educated here, preferably to any other place. For where can they reside more to their satisfaction, than in their native country? Where can they be bred up more virtuously, than under the eye of their parents? or with less expence, than at home?" "Upon what easy conditions might you have preceptors

^a A temple at *Tifernum Tiberinum*. See Epistle the first of this book. ¹ Comum.

² *Municipis mei filius Prætextatus*. A youth wearing the gown, called *Prætexta*; a vest, edged with a purple border, worn till about the age of fifteen. The word *Prætextatus* cannot well be rendered into English. ¹ Milan.

"brought

" brought hither? What a small additional expence must
 " you be at, above what it already costs you in your
 " childrens lodgings, diet, and other necessaries, which
 " are now all bought abroad? For my part, I, who
 " have no children, but consider my country as my child
 " or my parent, am ready to contribute a third part of
 " the sum, which you shall think proper to establish
 " upon this occasion. I would even promise to be at the
 " whole expence, did I not fear that such a donation
 " might be corrupted, and made to serve private interests:
 " Which I see happen in many places, where preceptors
 " are chosen by the public. There is but this one remedy
 " to obviate the evil. If the right of choice be left en-
 " tirely to the parents, their care, in that choice, will
 " be still augmented, by the necessity they are under of
 " contributing towards it: † For those, who perhaps
 " would be negligent in other people's expences, will cer-
 " tainly be careful in their own: and will use their ut-
 " most endeavours, that the person, who is to receive
 " his salary from me, shall be worthy of it, because their
 " own share is likewise to be paid. Therefore consult,
 " and come to some determination among yourselves, and
 " let my example inspire you, and be assured, that the
 " larger my part of the contribution shall be, the better
 " I shall be pleas'd. You can do nothing more honour-
 " able for your children; nothing more grateful to your
 " country. Let those, who are born here, be educated
 " here; that from their infancy they may love their na-
 " tive soil, by living in it. And I wish you could
 " draw hither such eminent masters, as should make
 " the studies here sought after by neighbouring cities;
 " so that, as your children are now sent to other places,
 " other people's children may, hereafter, resort to this."

I thought it necessary to repeat this conversation
 circumstantially, and from the beginning; that you
 may the better judge how grateful it would be to
 me, if you will undertake what I enjoin. For the
 importance of the affair makes me both enjoin, and
 entreat

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

entreat you, that out of the numerous concourse of learned men, who assemble about you, from an admiration of your great abilities, you would look out some masters worth soliciting: With this reserve however, that I shall not be tied down to any particular man: for I leave the parents at full liberty: let them judge; let them chuse; I lay claim to nothing but the care and expence. Therefore if one should be found, who relies on his own genius, sufficiently for the task, let him go thither, under this restriction, that he builds upon no certainty, but his own abilities. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This epistle requires no annotations; the subject matter of it, the noble gift intended, and the unaffected munificence of the donor, are all evident, and must stand confessed to every eye. Comments would rather eclipse, than augment their glory. The generous reader will shew his admiration of PLINY, by imitating the noble example: but *the miser* will still remain *the miser*, in spite of PLINY, or any other author whatever.

The eighth epistle of the first book ought to have been placed subsequent to this letter. PLINY there tells POMPEIUS SATURNINUS, "that he has given a library to the citizens of Comum." And it is not to be supposed he gave a library to that city, till he had established students there to enjoy it.

EPISTLE XIV.

PLINY to PATERNUS.

ACCORDING to custom, you will probably desire and expect some of my performances at the bar: but instead of them, I send you some of my most ludicrous pieces, a sort of rare and foreign curiosities. You will receive with this letter some
hendeca-

^m *hendecasyllable* verses ; the amusements of my leisure hours, whilst I was riding in my chariot, or was bathing, or at table. In these appear my sports, my pastimes, my loves, my griefs, my complaints, my anger ; described sometimes in an humbler, sometimes in a loftier strain, and, by the variety, I endeavour, that some of them should be relishable to one taste, some to another : some, perhaps, may please all. But if any of them seem too light and airy, a man of your reading will easily recollect, that the greatest, and gravest authors, who have written in this way, have not only made choice of wanton subjects, but have been very plain and open in their expressions. A liberty, of which I have abridged myself, not out of greater gravity, (for where should I have it ?) but because I am more timorous than they were. Otherwise I am sensible, that the rule laid down by CATULLUS, concerning these little performances, is a very just one.

Chaste as a vestal, let your poet be,
 But not a foe to mirth and gaiety :
 Some luscious turns, which prose will not permit,
 May please in verse, and only pass for wit.

How much I value your judgement, you may learn from hence, that I had rather you would give a strict examination to all these performances together, than only to select some few among them for applause. And indeed, pieces, written in the utmost exactness, cease to appear so, when compared with others, that are as good. Besides, a critic of sense and knowledge ought not to compare works of a different nature with each other ; but to examine

^m So called from their measure, consisting of eleven syllables. The *Lesbian sparrow*, by CATULLUS, is in that metre.

Pastor deliciae meae puellae.

every

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every piece by itself; and not judge unfavourably of any performance, if it be perfect in its kind. But why should I say more? For, to excuse or to commend trifles, by a long preface, is still more trifling. Of one thing however it seems necessary to advertise you; I intend to entitle these worthless toys, *Hendecasyllables*: a title, which has reference only to the metre. So that you may call them epigrams, or idylls, or eclogues, or, as many will, little poems, or whatever else you please: I only offer you *hendecasyllable* verses. I must entreat, from your sincerity, that you would speak your judgement as freely to me upon my book, as you would express it to others; nor is there any difficulty in what I desire; for if this were the best, or the only work, that I have given to the public, it might seem too harsh, perhaps, to say, "seek out some other employment;" but it is very consistent with good nature and good breeding to say, "you have a brighter sphere to shine in." Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

PLINY stands in great need of an excuse for employing his time in the manner mentioned to PATERNUS. It is very distasteful to see a man of sense, and gravity, taking delight in trifles, that tend rather to vitiate, than to amuse the mind; And indeed, PLINY seems suspicious, at the latter end of this epistle, that his friend PATERNUS will scarce approve of such very loose and idle performances, as are now offered to his perusal.

Ego tantum hendecasyllabos præsto: "I only lay before you "hendecasyllables." SCALIGER, in his description of that species of poetry distinguished by the name of *Hendecasyllabi*, concludes by saying; *Lascivi enim maxime omnium sunt. Quibus igitur omnia canere liceret. Omnibus quoque modis & posse, & dicere judicarunt*: "They are the most lascivious of any species of poetry. In them, the poet has a license to sing all kinds of subjects. And no manner of style were thought indecent or improper."

The

The natural turn of **PLINY'S** genius seems to have been fitted for works of seriousness and importance. His contemporaries were of the same opinion; as we may learn from a letter to **CAPITO**, which we shall see hereafter, and which begins, *Suades, ut historiam scribam, & suades non solus; Multi hoc me sæpe monuerunt*: "You persuade me to undertake a history: nor is your advice single: many of my friends encourage me in the same attempt." The *Minutiae* of the most decent poetry were not the proper amusements of an historian, whose leisure hours ought to be employed upon solid, and sublime subjects, in every kind. Nor ought **PLINY** to have descended so low, as to imitate the epigrammatic turns of **CATULLUS**, when his emulation had raised him to aim at the oratorical style of **CICERO**.

This epistle is an instance, that it is as absolutely necessary for us, to be as wary and considerate in our choice of proper amusements, as of proper studies.

^a Lib. v. Ep. 8.

E P I S T L E XV.

PLINY to **MINUTIUS FUNDANUS**.

IF I am governed by judgement in any one particular, it is in the singular affection I bear **ASINIUS RUFUS**. He is a most extraordinary man: and a great lover of all good men: for, why may I not number myself among those, who are good? He is also intimately acquainted with **CORNELIUS TACITUS**; whose great character you know. If, therefore, both of us are in your favour, you must necessarily entertain the same sentiments of **RUFUS** as of us; since likeness of manners is the strongest cement of friendships. He hath many children: for, even in this respect, he has discharged the duty of a good citizen; and, was by no means unwilling to have his wife prolific, even in an age, when a single child, (such are the advantages of being childless) is thought a burthen. But he has despised these fashions, and is become

become a grandfather. His grandchildren are by SATURIUS FIRMUS; whom you will love, as I do, when you come to look nearer into him. These particulars are not impertinent: as they tend to inform you how extensive, and how numerous a family, you may oblige by a single favour. Which I am induced to ask, first, by my wishes, next, by the certainty of a good omen.

I rejoice, and foresee, that you will be consul next year; for so your virtues, and the judgement of the emperor lead me to prophesy. It would concur extremely well, if ASINUS BASSUS, the eldest son of RUFUS, were questor the same year: A young man, (I know not whether I should say, what the father desires me to think, and say, but the modesty of the son forbids) preferable even to his father. Although I never fail to find credit with you in every thing, yet it is difficult to believe me concerning an absent person, that he has so much industry, probity, learning, genius, application, and memory, as you will find in him upon trial.

I wish, our age was so productive of men of good qualities, that some might be found, whom you ought to prefer to BASSUS. Let me then, first, persuade and advise you, to examine carefully, and to be long in considering, the person you should chuse.

But I will boast no more of my friend: I will only say, that he is a young man, worthy to be adopted by you; after the manner of our ancestors; in the place of a son. For wise men, like you, ought to receive children from the commonwealth; such, as we wish to receive from nature.

It will be honourable to you, when consul, to have a questor, whose father is of the prætorian, and whose relations are of consular dignity; and who, though yet but a youth, is, in their judgement, an honour to their family. Therefore indulge my desires, follow my advice; and above all things pardon

don me, if I seem too forward. First, because every man's love generally outruns his wishes; and next, because in a city, where all things are carried on by the earliness of the application, those, who wait for the proper time of soliciting, come too late: lastly, the presumption of obtaining what we desire gives us great pleasure. Let *BASSUS* revere you, as consul: and let him be regarded by you, as questor: and thus permit me, who have a most sincere affection for you both, to enjoy a double satisfaction: for as you and *BASSUS*'s are so equally dear to me, that I shall employ all the power, industry, and interest I have, in promoting him to whomsoever he happens to be questor; and likewise in assisting your questor, whoever he shall be; so shall I have great joy, if my endeavours, and both the strength of my friendship, and your consulship, should all unite in serving the same young man; especially if my entreaties shall obtain your assistance for him: you, to whose vote the senate will most willingly acquiesce; and to whose testimony they will give the greatest credit. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

It appears from this letter to *FUNDANUS*, that the consul elect usually named his questor, and the senate approved, or disapproved his choice. But there is a sentence in the epistle, so extremely dark and intricate, that it is very difficult to strike out the least light from it; or to guess what gave rise to such an assertion.

PLINY, among other commendations of *ASINIUS RUFUS*, says, "that he took pleasure in finding himself the father of a numerous offspring, although the age he lived in gave rewards to those who had no children; and therefore, even one son only was looked upon as a burthen °."

° *Fœcunditate uxoris largè frui voluit, eo seculo, quo plerique etiam singulos filios orbitatis præmia graves faciunt.*

The *Premia orbitatis* are so contrary to all the known maxims of the *Romans*, in their most abandoned times, that it is scarce possible to surmise, what our author hints at in this particular.

In all the traces of antiquity, we shall constantly find, that the antients paid great regard to matrimony, and great honours to prolific persons. The *jus trium liberorum*, (privileges granted to the fathers of three children) has been already touched upon ^p. And, if I mistake not, there were laws made to compel, or at least to encourage persons to marry. KENNET, in his *Roman Antiquities*, tells us, it was usual for the censors to lay a fine on old batchelors; and DIONYSIUS HALICARNASSEUS mentions an old constitution, by which all persons of full age were obliged to marry. But the first law of certainty, among the *Romans*, was made by AUGUSTUS ^q, in the year of *Rome* seven hundred and thirty six; which law was afterwards improved in the year seven hundred and sixty two; and therein are contained both rewards and punishments. The rewards were, that magistrates should take place according to the number of their children; and a married man before a batchelor; and in elections, that candidates should be preferred, who had many children; and any person might stand for a dignity, before the usual time, if he had as many children as he wanted years of being capable to hold the dignity. And farther, that in the city of *Rome*, whoever had three children, in other parts of *Italy* four, and in the provinces five, should be excused from all troublesome offices in the place where he lived.

The punishments were, that unmarried persons should be incapable of receiving any legacy or inheritance by will, except from near relations. And those who were married, and had not any children, could take no more than half the estate.

^p See observations on Ep. 13. Book 2.

^q HORACE alludes to this law (which he calls the *Lex Marita*) in the *Carmen Seculare*, where he says,

Divæ producas sobolem, patrumque
 Prosperes decreta super jugandis
 Feminis, prolisque novæ feraci,
 Legem Maritâ.

With

With such honourable advantages, on behalf of marriage and children, and such remarkable disadvantages to the unmarried and childless, it is hard to unravel PLINY's intention in the place abovementioned. One of the commentators explains the sentence thus; *Præmia orbitatis, id est, munera, quæ mittebantur orbis: adeo creverat avaritia, ut patri unicus filius videretur molestus, quia scilicet per eum privabatur muneribus, quæ dabantur orbis a captatoribus:* "The rewards of sterility were the gifts sent to married men, who had no children. Avarice was now at that height, that a single child was thought a burden to a father, because, from that circumstance of having a child, he was deprived of those gifts, which sycophants were willing to bestow." Unless the words bear this sense, their purport must remain unknown. But to what an immense height was the avarice of the Romans arisen, if they could possibly think it preferable to die childless, for the sake of receiving presents and adulation during their life-time, rather than to leave an honest, but more moderate fortune to the inheritance of their own children and descendants!

The questorship was the first employment any man could bear in the commonwealth. It might be undertaken at twenty four, or twenty five years of age; and being a post rather of fatigue, than dignity, was generally bestowed upon young men. The frequent revolutions in the government occasioned these officers to be multiplied, and divided into various sorts and denominations: but those under the consuls were originally called *Quæstores peregrini*; and afterwards *urbani*. They had the treasury under their care, and were obliged to keep an exact account of the public expences. The laws, and decrees of the senate, were likewise committed to their custody: and upon any expedition, they delivered the military ensigns to the consuls; and exposed to auction the goods taken from the enemy in battle.

An office of so much bustle and business, and at the same time of so great trust, ought always to have been executed by men of equal character, and capacity, to ASINIUS BAS-SUS, whose birth rather reflected lustre upon the questorship, than received any from it. His father was of the prætorian, and his relations of the consular order. But RUFUS himself bore a higher title: The friend and favourite of PLINY.

* CATANÆUS.

PLINY'S EPISTLES:

EPISTLE XVI.

PLINY to VALERIUS PAULLINUS.

REJOICE upon my account, rejoice upon your own account, rejoice upon account of the public. Literature is still honoured. When I lately pleaded before the centumviri, there was no room for my approach, except by crossing the tribunal¹, and passing through the judges, all other places were so crowded. Add to this, that a young man, finely dressed, having had his tunic² torn, which often happens in a croud, stood, with only his gown thrown over him, no less than seven hours together; for so long my pleading continued, not without greater advantage than fatigue. Let us, therefore, apply ourselves to our studies; and let not the idleness of other people be a pretence for our own. There are those who will both hear and read; provided we take pains to prepare something worth being heard, or read. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

PLINY has sufficient reason to be as much elated as he appears by this epistle, if his audience paid a strict attention to what he said for seven hours together. The beau continuing one of his hearers, after the misfortune of the tunic, is certainly a strong circumstance in his favour. The eloquence must be very powerful, that could confine a man of dress, and parade; and could soften those passions, which must infallibly arise, when his finery was not only discomposed, but torn to pieces. I am afraid, however, that PLINY flatters himself upon the occasion: and I am

¹ The tribunal was a raised seat where the prætor sat: the judges were placed on each side a little below him.

² The tunic was a vest worn under the toga. Persons of high parade wore them with sleeves.

apt to think, the young gentleman was not detained by inclination, but by necessity; the concourse of people was too great to let him stir; he was not only hemmed in, but so closely pinioned, as to be deprived of all the gracefulness of motion; nor came he, either with hopes to hear, or inclination to understand, the eloquence of the orator, but merely induced by idle curiosity, and the natural tendency, which all beaux have to public places.

E P I S T L E XVII.

P L I N Y to G A L L U S.

YOU both advise, and entreat me, to undertake, in her absence, the cause of CORELLIA, against C. CÆCILIUS, consul elect. I am thankful for your advice, but I have reason to complain of your request. I ought to be advised, in order to be informed, but I need not be entreated to do, what would be most base in me to omit. Can I doubt a moment, whether I ought to defend the daughter of CORELLIUS? It is true, I have no absolute intimacy, but yet I have a friendship with the very man, against whom you desire me to be an advocate: and we may add also, the dignity of that man, and the honour, to which he is elected: an honour, that I hold in the greater reverence, as I myself have lately filled that employment. For, it is natural to wish, that those dignities, which we have enjoyed, should be held in the highest esteem. But, all these arguments appear cold and trifling to me, when I reflect, that I am to assist the daughter of CORELLIUS. Methinks I have him present to my imagination: he was a man, second to none, in this our age, in dignity, in piety, or in quickness of judgement: he was a man, whom I first began to love from admiration, and what seldom hap-

^a CORELLIUS RUFUS, whose character is drawn by PLINY, in the 12th Epistle of the 1st Book.

EPISTLE XVIII.

PLINY to M. ARRIUS ANTONINUS.

HOW can I better convince you of my approbation, or what stronger proof can I give, that I admire your *Greek* epigrams, than by endeavouring to imitate, and turn some of them into *Latin*? Much indeed to their advantage, occasioned chiefly by my own inability; and next, by the want, or rather, as *LUCRETIVS* expresses it, the poverty of our native tongue. But if these, which are in *Latin*, and are mine, carry with them the appearance of some beauty; imagine what infinite graces must be contained in those, which are yours, and published in *Greek*. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

It has been already observed ⁷, that there are three epistles from *PLINY* to *ANTONINUS*; two in this book, and one in the fifth, all upon the same subject, but scattered, and dispersed as usual. The commentators have been no less cruel to *PLINY*, than *MEDEA* was to *ABSYRTUS* ⁸; they first murder him; then, to prevent too strict an enquiry after his murderers, they strew his limbs in different places; and leave every passenger to gather them up, either as his leisure or inclination permits. These lines in *LUCRETIVS*,

*Nunc & ANAXAGORÆ scrutemur Homœomeriam,
Quam Græci memorant, nec nostrâ dicere lingua
Concedit nobis patrii sermonis egestas* ⁹;

confirm our author's complaint of the poverty of the *Latin* tongue; and the version of them is almost as strong an instance, as can be given, how far an original may sink in a translation.

⁷ See the notes on epistle the third.

⁸ Her brother.

⁹ *LUCRET.* lib. 1. v. 839.

Next

Next let's examine with a curious eye,
 ANAXAGORAS's philofophy;
 By copious *Greece*, term'd *Homosemery*.
 For which our *Latin* language, poor in words,
 Not one expreffive fingle voice affords ^b.

In fo long, and fo laborious a performance, as the translation of LUCRETIUS, we may alledge, in defence of our learned countryman, Mr. CRIBCH, that a translator is not totally inexcusable, if he fometimes indulges himself in a small neglect, or snatches up the easiest rhyme that occurs, where the passage is of no greater consequence, than what has been just now quoted: perhaps too he may designedly withdraw himself behind a cloud, in order to come forth with new glory, and a fresh reinforcement of splendor: But in epigrams, and works of that kind, the thoughts, the turn, and the manner, must be preserved, and expressed to the utmost exactness; not the least atom must be suffered to escape, nor the least drop to evaporate; otherwise the whole beauty will be lost in the transfusion.

^b CRIBCH'S LUCRETIUS, line 841.

E P I S T L E XIX.

PLINY to HISPULLA.

AS you are an example of all virtue, and as you loved your excellent and most affectionate brother with a mutual tenderness, and look upon his daughter as your own; not only treating her with the indulgence of an aunt, but supplying to her the loss she long since sustained in a father; I cannot doubt, but you will be much rejoiced to know, that she proves worthy of her father; worthy of you; worthy of her grandfather.

She has great wit; she is an excellent oeconomist; she loves me entirely; a sure signal of her chastity. Add to this, her disposition to literature; which is

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the consequence of her affection towards me. She has collected my works; she reads; and even gets them by heart. When I am to plead, what infinite anxiety does she suffer! When I have done, how great is her joy! She appoints persons, on purpose to tell her what applauses, what acclamations I have gained; and what judgement is pronounced. When I rehearse in public, she places herself as near as possible; and sits under the covert of a veil, and hears with the greatest satisfaction the praises which are bestowed upon me. She sings my verses, and adapts them to the lute; untaught by any musician, but that best of masters, love.

From hence I hope, with the utmost degree of certainty, that our happiness will be perpetual; and will encrease every day. For in me she is neither captivated with youth, nor person; both which are liable to accidents and decay; but with the glory of my name. Nor would other thoughts become one, who had been fashioned by your hands, instructed by your precepts. Under your roof she beheld nothing but purity and virtue; and in short, was taught to love me by your recommendation. For as you used to love my mother as your parent, so were you pleased to praise and model me, in the infancy of my life; and to foretel I should one day prove to be such a man, as my wife imagines me to be at this moment.

We mutually contend therefore to give you thanks; I, because you have given her to me; she, because you have given me to her. You have chosen us out, as it were, formed for each other. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This is a most choice epistle. Few and delicate have been the examples of such conjugal love. Men cannot, or will not see the perfections of their wives. From the day of marriage, the woman generally lays aside her reserve; and the

the man his civility. She grows forward in her looks, and overbearing in her conversation : he becomes sour in his countenance, and snappish in his discourse. Or if they appear fond (as from the novelty of the state it sometimes happens) the grossness of the passion is too nauseous to be named.

Love and tenderness are sacred to the hours of privacy and retirement ; and therefore, when CALPURNIA went to hear her husband's public lectures, she put on a veil. Under that cover she kept her looks concealed ; and her ears attentively listened to the praises he acquired ; without discovering, by blushes of joy, the pleasure which those praises conveyed to her heart.

Her love of literature proceeded wholly from her love of PLINY. She was resolved to make herself a proper and worthy companion for the man, in whose company she chose to live ; well knowing, that the endowments of the mind outlast the splendor of the person. She had undoubtedly all the qualifications necessary to make a woman lovely and desirable. She sung finely, and played upon the lute. So that if this epistle was thoroughly considered by the fair sex, where CALPURNIA is described as endeavouring to encrease her judgement, by exercising her memory, and improving her taste, they would see an example before their eyes, in what manner they might make themselves agreeable, in spite of that dreadful and irresistible enemy, old age.

E P I S T L E XX.

PLINY to MAXIMUS.

I Communicated to you my sentiments upon every one of your particular tracts, as I read them : take now my opinion in general. The work is not only beautiful, but solid, pointed, sublime, diversified, elegant, neat, full of figures, and of an extent, that redounds much to your honour. In it you spread most spaciouly the sails both of your wit, and of your grief : and each of these have been reciprocally a help to the other : for your wit added sublimity and grandeur to your grief ; and your grief gave force and sharpness to your wit. Farewell.

O B S E R-

OBSERVATIONS.

Throughout this collection of letters, there is scarce any man, to whom so many epistles are addressed, as to MAXIMUS. We shall find PLINY, in the first epistle of the ninth book, pressing MAXIMUS to publish his writings against PLANTA, (or BLATERA, the scholiasts are not agreed in his name) who had been, when living, the professed enemy of MAXIMUS. But the *opus pulchrum*, mentioned in this epistle, though characterized in the highest manner, and adorned with the strongest epithets, has no particular mark, by which any conjecture may be formed, when, or upon whom, it was written. If surmises at random are allowable, (and in relation to classic authors, we may reasonably conclude they are) it was a poem on the death of some near relation, or some beloved friend. *Nam dolori sublimitatem et magnificentiam ingenium, ingenio vim et amaritudinem dolor addidit.* Verse is better suited to the pathetic eloquence of grief, than prose. The anguish of a heavy heart sounds harmoniously sorrowful, when uttered in poetry; and the sincerity of the passion adds force and bitterness to the woe.

Not like a mortal, must the muse be sought,
Nor will by false appearances be caught.
The heavenly blooming virgin to engage,
Sue her with real grief, or decent rage:
To moving accents the soft goddess bends,
And melancholy's mournful voice attends,
Makes the sad heart some ease in numbers find,
And cheers by pow'r of verse the drooping mind.

EPISTLE XXI.

PLINY to VELIUS CEREALIS.

AH! sad! ah cruel catastrophe of the HELVIDIÆ!
two sisters, each brought to bed of a daughter,
both dead in child-bed! I am greatly afflicted, though
not immeasurably grieved. It is, methinks, a melancholy

choly consideration, that two virtuous young ladies should, by their fruitfulness, be snatched away in the flower of their youth. I grieve the fate of the infants, who are deprived of their parents, and made motherless, as soon as born : I grieve, for the surviving excellent husbands : and I grieve likewise, on my own account ; for, I persevere in my firm attachment to their father, though he is dead ; as by a particular speech, and by several treatises, I have testified.

Out of three of his children, there is but one left ; one only, to support and sustain that house, which had lately so many props. But, should fate preserve him, strong and unshaken, like his father, and his grandfather, my grief will then be much asswaged. But my fears, both for his health, and his morals, are the greater, because he is the last of his family. You know the tenderness, you know the anxiety of my mind, where I love : and therefore, you will wonder the less, that I should fear most, where I have the greatest hopes. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The short-liv'd young ladies, lamented in this epistle, were granddaughters to HELVIDIUS PRISCUS, who was put to death by VESPASIAN, and daughters of HELVIDIUS his son, who perished on account of his wit, in the reign of DOMITIAN.

HELVIDIUS PRISCUS, the elder, was son-in-law to THRASEA PÆTUS, whose story has been mentioned in some preceding observations. TACITUS gives PRISCUS a most advantageous character. “ He distinguished himself
 “ very early, says that historian, by his bright and remarkable genius ; and applied his youth entirely to studies,
 “ that might afterwards render him useful and serviceable
 “ to his country. He strictly adhered to the doctrines of
 “ such as maintain, those things only to be good, which are
 “ just and equitable ; and those things only to be evil,
 “ which are dishonest. From these principles, he looked
 “ upon wealth, power, nobility, and other acquisitions of
 “ that

" that kind, as trifles to be neglected and despised : and
 " from hence became in time the best citizen; senator, hus-
 " band, son-in-law, and friend, that *Rome* ever produced.
 " He was chosen, and preferred to all others, by THRASIA
 " PÆTUS, as a husband for his daughter, when he had
 " attained no higher employment in the state, than the que-
 " storship. And upon the death of his father-in-law was ex-
 " iled, as obnoxious to NERO and his minions. In the
 " reign of GALBA he was recalled, and took his place again
 " in the senate, where he signalized himself by many ex-
 " cellent speeches, and shewed great gratitude to the me-
 " mory of his father THRASIA, by impeaching THRA-
 " SEA'S chief accuser, MARCELLUS." Not to be tempted
 too far into an account of a *Roman*, whose actions and
 character may be found most fully expatiated upon by TA-
 CITUS, in the fourth book of his history ; let us look into
 the circumstances of his death, as related by SÆTONIUS.
 They are remarkable enough to excuse the following quo-
 tation.

Non temerè quis punitus insons reperitur, nisi absente eo, & ignaro, aut certe invito atque decepto. HELVIDIO PRISCO, qui reversum ex Syria, solus, privato nomine VESPASIANUM salutaverat, & in prætura omnibus edictis sine honore ac mentione ulla transmiserat, non ante succensuit, quam altercationibus insolentissimis penè in ordinem redactus. Hunc quoque, quamvis relegatum primo, deinde & interfici jussum, magni æstimavit servare quoquo modo, missis, qui percussores revocarent : & servasset, nisi jam periisse falso nuntiatum esset. Cæterum neque cæde cujusquam umquam lætatus, justis suppliciis illacrymavit etiam & ingemuit.

" In his reign, [VESPASIAN'S] scarce any innocent
 " man was punished, unless he [the emperor] was absent,
 " and knew nothing of it ; or it was done against his will,
 " and by deceiving him. HELVIDIUS PRISCUS, who was
 " the only person, who saluted him upon his return from
 " Syria, by his private name, VESPASIAN, and who, when
 " prætor, passed him by, in all edicts, without the least
 " mention or honour, did not feel any effects of his anger,
 " till for the most insolent provocations imaginable he was
 " obliged to humble him. And though he first banished
 " him, and afterwards ordered him to be put to death ; yet
 " he still thought it worth while to save his life, and sent

* SÆTONII VESPASIANUS, cap. 15.

" messengers

“messengers for that purpose to stop the executioners; and
 “would have saved him, if he had not been falsely told,
 “that he was already executed. Nay, he was so little
 “pleased at the death of any man whatever, that he even
 “wept and sighed for the execution of the most guilty.”

Here we have had the outlines of VERRESIAN'S tender disposition, and at the same time a view of a most undaunted spirit in HELVIDIUS. The love of liberty was still extant among some particular Romans. PRISCUS was one of those few, who, with the antient notions of freedom, retained an utter abhorrence to tyranny, and, like BRUTUS, would have killed his father to relieve his country.

HELVIDIUS the younger, (father of the HELVIDIÆ SORORES) was the son of PRISCUS. His character seems eclipsed by the brighter glories of his father: at least history mentions little relating to him, but the cause of his death, of which SÆTONIUS gives the following account: *Occidit & HELVIDIUM filium, quod quasi scenico exodio sub personâ PARIDI & OENONIS divortium suum cum uxore taxasset*: “He (DOMITIAN) likewise put to death HELVIDIUS the
 “younger, because in a farce, under the feigned names of
 “PARIS and OENONÉ; he had glanced at the emperor's
 “divorce from his wife.”

We find PLINY speaking of HELVIDIUS in this epistle, as a person, for whose memory he had testified great regard. *Nam patrem illarum defunctum quoque perseverantissime diligo, ut actione meâ librisque testatum est*: “For I love their de-
 “ceased father with the strongest attachment still; as my
 “pleadings in my book, in honour of him, must witness.”
 Hence we may infer, that he was a worthy descendant of those noble ancestors, from whom he sprung. The death of the two young ladies is related in so plaintive and so moving a manner, with such expressions of affectionate anxiety for their relations, and such fears for the welfare and character of their brother, that it is impossible not to catch the distress, and to feel for PLINY that sympathizing affliction, and those tender sentiments, of which he is an example. But death makes no distinction.

Not virtue's power, nor eloquence, can charm
 The king of terrors, or divert his arm:
 Alike the object of his fatal rage,
 Is generous youth, or venerable age.

With

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With sure destruction fraught, his shafts he throws,
 And breaths contagion wheresoe'er he goes.
 Dreaded, uncall'd, he still pursues his course,
 And urging on his wild impetuous force,
 Slays undistinguish'd statesmen, misers, hogs,
 Popes, monkeys, heroes, emperors, and dogs.

EPISTLE XXII.

PLINY to SEMPRONIUS RUFUS.

I Have been taken into council, and have been present at the hearing of a certain affair before our emperor. Public games were exhibited among the *Viennenses*, according to the testament of some person deceased. TREBONIUS RUFINUS, a man of great merit, and my particular friend, in his duumvirate, took care to stop, and abolish these entertainments. It was alledged, that he had done this, without any legal authority. He pleaded his own cause; not with less success, than eloquence. It gave a grace to his pleading, that like a *Roman*, and like a good citizen, he spoke, in an affair relating to himself, with discretion and dignity. When the voices in council were asked, JUNIUS MAURICUS (whose firmness and veracity cannot be exceeded) declared it as his opinion, that these games ought not to be restored to the *Viennenses*. He added, "I could wish they were prohibited even at Rome." Spoken, you will say, with constancy and resolution: Why not? Such a speech is no novelty from MAURICUS: he shewed a resolution equal to this, before the emperor NERVA; when he and some other choice friends supped with him in private. VEIENTO was next to the emperor at table, he lay even in his bosom. I have said all, when I have named the man. The discourse turned upon CATULLUS MESSALINUS, who being blind, had that curse superadded to a cruel disposition. He was void
of

of fear, of shame, and of pity; and therefore DOMITIAN made use of him the oftner (as we make use of darts, which fly without sight or caution) towards the destruction of every good man. All, who were at table, talked in general of the wickedness and sanguinary counsels of this wretch; when the emperor asked, "*What think ye would be suffer, were he now alive?*" MAURICUS replied, "*He would sup with us.*"

I have gone out of my road too far, but willingly. It was agreed that the games should be suppressed; games, which had infected the manners of the *Viennenses*, as ours at *Rome* infect all the world. For *Viennensian* vices remain among themselves; ours spread most diffusively; and as in human bodies, so in empire, that disease is most dangerous, which proceeds from the head. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The resolute uprightnes of TREBONIUS RUFINUS, during his duumvirate, and the free answer given by JUNIUS MAURICUS, to the emperor NERVA, ought not to be passed by unnoticed.

RUFINUS was one of the *duumviri municipales*, at *Vienne*^d, the metropolis of the *Allabroges*; lying upon the river *Rhosne*. These particular officers (for there were several sorts of duumviri) had a power in the free towns, equal to what the consuls had at *Rome*. They were chosen out of the *decuriones municipales*^e, and were sworn to serve the citizens, of which they were *duumviri*, with truth, justice, and fidelity. Their jurisdiction was of great extent; and their employment lasted five years; during which space of time, whilst TREBONIUS was in office, a certain person, whose name does not appear, left, by will, a sum of money to be laid out in public shews, for the diversion and entertainment of the *Viennenses*. TREBONIUS, who thought that amusements of this kind led away the people from their proper

^d A city in *Dauphiny*.

^e See the observations upon Ep. 8. Book 1.

business,

business, and put an entire stop to industry, prohibited, in this particular, the execution of the will; and the *Vienneuses*, highly incensed at his prohibition, denied that he had any authority to suspend their public diversions; and they complained of his behaviour to the emperor.

The enquiry into this affair seems to have been in the same manner, that some particular matters of state are enquired into by our kings, and the privy council; with this difference, that the privy counsellors in *England* are nominated and ascertained by the king himself, who summons together the whole number whenever he pleases: but by the initial sentence, in this epistle, *Interfui principis optimi cognitioni, in consilium assumptus*, "I was entrusted with the emperor's sentiments, being admitted into his council," it seems likely, that the emperors had no fixed and certain privy council, but chose out such persons, upon particular occasions, as they had a mind to consult.

We have not the least hint of the arguments made use of by TREBONIUS, when he pleaded before the emperor. In general, PLINY commends him; not only for speaking with a spirit becoming a Roman citizen, but, at the same time, with such weight and deliberation, as shewed him master of himself, and free from the passions and impetuosity, that too often hurry men into an unbecoming behaviour, when they attempt to defend their own cause. It is a maxim in the civil law, that, *If a yearly estate is left to a city, every year in that city a public shew should be made there, in memory of the testator; which if contrary to the laws of that city, the legacy ought to be converted to some other use, which is lawful.* It is probable, (especially as the civil law is built upon the Roman law) that TREBONIUS proceeded upon this maxim: he knew the power he had, as *duumvir*, was uncontrollable in this respect: he looked upon these games as unlawful; and thought the assemblies of the people, upon these occasions, dangerous; and he supported what he had done, with so much strength of reason and eloquence, that JUNIUS MAURICUS could not help crying out, *Vellem etiam Romæ tolli posset*: "I wish these entertainments were prohibited at *Rome*."

The character of MAURICUS gives us an idea of a true old Roman, *Quo viro nihil firmitus, nihil verius*: "Than whom, nothing could be more steady, nothing more true of heart." The answer of MAURICUS was a fair levelled

velled at VEIENTO. He had been an instrument of DOMITIAN's wickedness; and, as appears by this epistle, continued sufficiently in favour with NERVA, to be admitted at that emperor's table.

EPISTLE XXIII.

PLINY to POMPONIUS BASSUS.

I Have taken great pleasure in the accounts I received from our common friends, that you, agreeably to your wisdom, diversify and sustain your retirement by the sweet situation of your dwelling, and by the exercise you use both by sea and land; that you hold frequent learned disputations; that you read much, and hear much; and though your knowledge is very great, yet are making daily additions to it. Thus it becomes a man to grow old, who had filled the greatest civil employments, who had governed armies, and who, as long as it was proper for him, had devoted himself entirely to the service of the state; for we ought to dedicate the morning and the midday of life to our country; the evening of it to ourselves: a maxim which our laws point out to us, by allowing the age of sixty to be a warrantable time for retreat. Ah! when will that lawful time come for me? When will my age permit me to imitate your example, and fall honourably into the sweets of repose? When shall my retreat, without the imputation of indolence, be termed the enjoyment of tranquillity? Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The reflexions in this letter are very fine. They discover the same cast of inclination, the same love of retirement, which has been taken notice of in some preceding observations. There is a most inexpressible satisfaction arising in that mind, which can look back upon itself with pleasure,

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and after the hurry of the day, and the bustle necessary to ascend the hill of life, can take comfort in a calm and easy descent, and pass gently forward towards the mansions of eternity.

Every man of a serious and speculative disposition is naturally fond of solitude: but we are not sent into the world only to contemplate the works of our Creator, but to be active in our several stations, as becomes social beings, who were formed in aid and assistance of each other. Our country demands the vigour and strength of our days; and when we have performed our parts upon that stage, we may withdraw behind the scenes, and leave our robes and truncheons to younger actors, content and happy in the applauses we have received and deserved. This seems to be the purport of this elegant epistle, and shews the author to have had no other ambition, than what was built upon virtue, and a true devotion to his country.

EPISTLE XXIV.

PLINY to VALENS.

WHEN I lately pleaded before the *centumviri*, in their four courts of justice, I recollected that I had pleaded, when a young man, before the same judicature. My mind, as usual, took a larger scope. I began to consider, who were the partners of my labour before the present court, and who had been my fellow pleaders before the former. I found myself the only person remaining, who had been a speaker in both: so great changes does the brittle state of mortality, or the inconstancy of fortune, occasion. Some of my cotemporary pleaders were dead; others were banished; this man was silenced by age and infirmity; that man enjoyed the happiness of a voluntary retreat. Here, one has the command of an army; there another, by the emperor's favour, is exempted from all civil employments. How many changes have I myself gone thorough! I owed my first promotion to my learning; then I owed my danger

danger to it ; and now again I have risen by my studies. The friendships of men of worth were originally of great service to me ; then those very friendships hurt me ; and now again they have turned to my advantage. If you compute by years, the time is short ; if by the changes of affairs, you will imagine it an age : which may be a lesson to us to despair of nothing ; to trust in nothing ; since we find ourselves whirled round in this inconstant world by such a variety of revolutions. It is usual with me, to communicate my thoughts, and to admonish you, either by the precepts, or the examples, by which I govern myself. This was my inducement to the present epistle. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

This epistle is much to be admired. It is short, just, and useful ; and calculated to advise VALENS, in what manner to behave himself in so mutable and fluctuating a world, as providence has ordained us to inhabit. *Nil desperare, nulli rei fidere* : "To despair of nothing, to trust in nothing." Sentences of this kind are interspersed throughout all the classic authors. They are too well known to be quoted ; and whoever looks into the antient historians, particularly HERODOTUS, DIODORUS SICULUS, and JUSTIN, will find, that such kind of moral reflexions arise naturally from the mutable circumstances of facts, and incidents, which they describe. Men in general have ever been agitated by the same kind of restless spirit, and tumultuous passions. They have been guilty of the same vices and follies ; and liable to the same calamities, from their first original, to this day. Empires have risen and decayed ; arts and sciences have flourished in some places, where they never appeared before ; and have declined in others, where they had long flourished. Some countries have produced able and good men, at some particular seasons ; and others have been overrun with barbarism and ignorance. The excellence of the Christian institution itself has not made us much better than our ancestors. We know from it very fully our duty towards God and man ; but we will not put that knowledge

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into practice. If we are *wise as serpents*, we are resolved not to be *harmless as doves*. And yet in despite of the boasted wisdom and pride of moral antiquity, it is from the Christian doctrines alone we can receive the comfortable certainty, that all the miseries of this life will be made up, and the righteous will meet so full a compensation for their sufferings here, that no good man will have reason to think he has been hardly dealt with, for having been obliged to pass through this world, whatever storms and oppressions he might have encountered in the voyage.

EPISTLE XXV.

PLINY to MAXIMUS.

I Wrote you word, it was to be feared, that some abuse might arise from the manner of voting by balloting. It hath so happened. In the last elections, there were inserted in the tablets many loose jests, and some even too bad to be repeated: but in one tablet particularly were found the names of the voters instead of the candidates. The senate fired at this, and with great clamour addressed the offended emperor to punish the writer: but he^f disappointed them and remained concealed; and perhaps was one of those, who shewed greatest resentment. What idea can we form of this man's private behaviour at home, who, in an affair of such importance, at so serious a juncture, could jest so scurrilously? and, who even in the senate, is at once a giber, a fine gentleman, and a smart fellow. So great room for licentiousness has the confidence of being undiscovered given to wicked dispositions: *who can find us out?* is the argument, under which they entrench themselves. This man demanded the tablets, took his pen in his hand, held down his head to write; and whilst he fears no other, despises himself. From

^f The Writer.

hence

hence these mockeries, which are fit only for the stage. Where would you turn? What remedies would you seek? On every side the vices are more powerful than the remedies. But all these things will be taken care of by one ^s above us, to whose daily vigilance this impotent, but unbridled pertness of our times has given an additional weight of labour. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The ill consequences foretold by PLINY, in the twentieth epistle of the third book, which would probably arise from the tabellarian law, are now come to pass. That impudence, which he dreaded, has now appeared, but under such a disguise, as to run no hazard of a discovery; and PLINY shews a just indignation upon the occasion. But as there are some obscure passages in this epistle, let us endeavour to find out what they mean.

Quid hunc putamus domi facere, qui in tantâ re, tam serio tempore, tam scurriliter ludat? “If a man could be so scurrilously ludicrous at so serious a time, upon so important an occasion, what must his behaviour be at home?” That is, whoever could be guilty of such idle mockeries, when justice, decency, and the public good required a contrary behaviour, would undoubtedly sacrifice every thing to his own loose inclinations, and revel in enormities, when he was secure from the fear of punishment, as he might probably be at his own house.

Qui denique omnino in senatu dicax, et urbanus, et bellus est? This sentence is extremely difficult to translate closely, so as to come up to the full intention of PLINY’s words. They are likely enough to be aimed at some particular person, whom MAXIMUS would easily know by this description, *Qui in senatu dicax*, “who in the senate is a buffoon,” *et urbanus, et bellus est*: “and with an air of politeness is a mere coxcomb.”

Neminem veretur, se contemnit: “He fears no body, and yet despises himself.” That is, the inward dictates of his heart tell him, although he is safe from discovery, he is

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doing what he ought to be ashamed of; he feels his disgrace, although he is determined not to shew it: and while he acts in security, labours under the terrors of self-conviction: he is brought in guilty by his own conscience, when no other judge in the world could condemn him. The phraseology is extremely short, but very expressive; and he concludes the epistle in all the elegance of loyalty, by lamenting, that the impudence and impertinence of such idle people should disturb the happiness and peace of his imperial master.

EPISTLE XXVI.

PLINY to NEPOS.

YOU desire I should order such of my treatises, as you have affectionately purchased, to be read over and corrected. I shall certainly obey. For what task can I undertake more willingly, especially as it is your command? When a man of your great consequence, learning, politeness, and, what is more, placed in the busiest scene of life, going to govern one of our greatest provinces, sets estimation enough upon my writings to carry them with him, I ought to take all possible pains to prevent this part of his equipage from remaining entirely useless. I shall therefore first apply myself to make these companions as agreeable to you as possible, and then to prepare others, which you may add to your collection, when you return. My inducement to write must be great, since I know I shall have such a reader. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The first sentence in this epistle is not immediately intelligible. *Petis, ut libellos meos, quos studiosissime comparasti, legendas, recognoscendosque curem.* The meaning I apprehend to be this: "You desire I would direct those parts of my works, which you have purchased with such affectionate care, to be revised and corrected by the original manuscripts;" which being in PLINY'S own hands, from him

him only an exact copy could be obtained. The character of NEPOS, to whom this epistle is addressed, is given us by PLINY, in his fourth epistle of this book, addressed to Sossius SENECIO, the friend of PLUTARCH.

E P I S T L E XXVII.

PLINY to POMPEIUS FALCO.

THIS is the third day that I have attended SENTIUS AUGURINUS in the rehearsal of his poetical performances; with great pleasure, and indeed with great admiration. He calls them his Miscellanies^a. Among these many are trifling, many sublime, some are florid, some pathetic, many are writ in a panegyrical, and many in a satirical style. For some years past I think I have not seen any writings of that kind more perfect, unless either the affection I bear the author, or the encomiums he has bestowed upon me, have prejudiced my judgment. For he begins with a compliment to me upon my diverting myself now and then in the poetical way. And therefore I will make you judge of my partiality, if I can recollect his second line; for I remember the rest, and have them ready for you.

For more exalted flights unfit
 I tune my lyre to love and wit;
 In strains like those CATULLUS sung,
 Or such as flow'd from CALVUS' tongue.
 Without authorities like these
 My sportive muse may hope to please.
 PLINY beyond them all I prize,
 In virtues equal, and as wise.

^a Poëmata.

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My pattern he in what I do,
 My pattern, and my function too.
 Quitting the forum, with delight
 On gayest themes he deigns to write,
 And oft his vacant pen employs
 On love's imaginary joys,
 From business freed, in strains like these
 He writes, and never fails to please.

What he? the wonder of our age?
 Like CATO, said you, grave and sage?
 Ev'n he: nor need I then to care,
 What CATO's thoughts of poets were.

Go you, who fain would make pretence
 To more than ordinary sense;
 Despise the muse, and laugh at love,
 Let your austere behaviour prove,
 (And all, who please, believe it true)
 That PLINY has less wit than you.

You see how smart, how proper, how expressive they are! I dare engage to you, the whole book, which I will send you as soon as it comes out, is of a piece, and in the same taste. In the mean while prepare a place in your heart for this young man, and congratulate our age upon producing such a genius, which he still adorns by his excellent morals. He is continually with SPURINNA and ANTONINUS; being related to the one, and a welcome guest to the other. You may easily conjecture from hence, that he is a youth of no small accomplishments, since he is in so high favour with men of their years and worth. For what the proverb says is certainly true, "*Such as the man is, such is the company he delights in.*" Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

It must be confessed there is an air of vanity in this epistle, far from being consistent with that modesty, which is not only amiable, and attractive, but which may be ranked among the duties of mankind.

The antients are full of self-praise. Fame was the ultimate end of all their views. Incense could not be more agreeable to their deities, than adulation was to themselves.

The verses, quoted from AUGURINUS, give us no advantageous idea of him as a poet. They are neither musical, nor easily understood. But as the morals of the author are represented, by PLINY, remarkably conspicuous, his eminent virtues were of more consequence to the public, than the easiest strains of poetry could possibly have been.

E P I S T L E XXVIII.

P L I N Y to C A T I L I U S S E V E R U S.

HERENNIUS SEVERUS, a man of great learning, thinks it will be an honour to place the portraits of CORNELIUS NEPOS and TITUS CASSIUS in his library. They were both natives of your city, and he desires, if their pictures are there, as it is probable they are, that I would take care to get them copied, and painted. This is a commission, which I particularly enjoin you to execute: first, because your friendship always disposes you to grant any favour I ask: again, because you bear the utmost respect to literature, and the utmost affection to men of learning: lastly, because you reverence and admire, not only your country itself, but all those who have done honour to its name. I beg you would chuse out the most exact painter you can find: for as it is difficult to perfect a likeness from

an original, so a copy, from a copy, is still more difficult. I entreat you therefore, that the artist you pitch upon may not be permitted to vary, even for the better. Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

CORNELIUS NEPOS flourished in the reigns of the two first Cæsars, JULIUS and AUGUSTUS; an æra, when the Roman language was in the utmost perfection. He was a man of high reputation for learning, and all those other advantages, which tend to establish a great character. Such of his works, as are come down to these later ages, are but a small part of his more numerous writings. They are excellent in their kind. The purity of the language, the dignity of the style, the conciseness of the narration, (in which the manners and memoirs of so many different men are included) demonstrate the extensive genius of the author, and strike us with deep regret for those other pieces, which time has destroyed. He has not only given us the lives of illustrious generals and commanders, such as MILTIADES, THEMISTOCLES, PAUSANIAS, and others, but has also written the life of CATO, and of ATTICUS; with the latter of whom, and with TULLY, this eminent biographer lived in the utmost familiarity and friendship. The place of his birth is uncertain; some authors say he was born at Parma, others at Verona: the point is of no great importance.

TITUS CASSIUS SEVERUS was an orator of mean birth, but high distinction in eloquence: or, to make use of the words of TACITUS¹, *Relatum et de CASSIO SEVERO exule, qui sordidæ originis, maleficiæ vitæ, sed orandi validus*: "The affair of CASSIUS SEVERUS, who had been exiled, came before the senate: he was a man of a very sordid original; of a very mischievous life; but he was a powerful orator." He was of a satirical, implacable nature, which he indulged so imprudently, as to bring upon himself the revenge of many powerful enemies; and accordingly he was banished by a solemn order of senate, during the

¹ Annal. TACITI, lib. 4. cap. 21.

reign of AUGUSTUS. He died in the twenty fifth year of his exile, amidst all the pinching circumstances of want, and wretchedness; a miserable martyr to his own slanderous disposition: nor was the inveteracy of his temper to be conquered, but by death: for TACITUS adds, *Atque illic [in exilio] eadem acclitanda, recentia veteraque odia advertit; bonisque exutus, interdicto igni atque aqua, saxo Seriphio concessit*: "And by continuing, during his exile, in the same paths of malice, he confirmed the former, and raised fresh enmities against himself. Thus he grew old, upon the rocks of *Seriphos*, deprived of his estate, and interdicted from fire and water."

If the picture of CORNELIUS NEPOS was an honour to the library of HERENNIUS SEVERUS, certainly the portrait of T. CASSIUS SEVERUS was rather a disgrace to it. But as the epistle is addressed to JULIUS SEVERUS, and as HERENNIUS SEVERUS is the person, who desires the pictures; such a parity of names gives us room to imagine, that they were both relations to TITUS CASSIUS SEVERUS; a circumstance, which PLINY purposely avoids to mention, because all authors agree, that the birth of CASSIUS was low and obscure.

* One of the *Cyclades*, islands in the *Archipelago*.

E P I S T L E XXIX.

PLINY to VOCONIUS ROMANUS.

AWAKE, my friend! and the next time business is going forward, at any rate come into court. It is to no purpose to sleep under the confidence of my indulgence: your idleness will not go unpunished. Observe, LICINIUS NEPOS, the prætor, a rigid and resolute man, imposed a fine, even upon a senator, who pleaded his own cause in the senate, but pleaded it by petitioning to be forgiven: the fine was remitted; but, not till he had suffered much fear; had made his submission; and was under
the

the necessity of a pardon: You will say, all prætors are not so severe: you are mistaken; for, although I own, a man must be naturally severe, who can make, or revive such a precedent; yet when it is made, or revived, the best-natured man alive may be strict enough to put it in execution. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

From this epistle we learn, that the prætors had the power of convening the judges, and of imposing of fines on those, who were summoned, and neglected to appear. It farther shews, that the senate had a power of reducing, confirming, or taking off those fines.

The prætors, for some time past, had been too easy and remiss in discharging this part of their duty: and from hence the judges had contracted an inattention to business, and a laziness in their attendance; which occasioned great delay, and much expence to the suitors. But LICINIUS NEPOS, at that time prætor, a man rigid, and resolute in exerting his authority, went so far, as even to impose a fine upon one of the senators, who, trusting to former indulgences, had not paid immediate obedience to his summons. The fine being thus laid, the senator had no relief, but from the senate. Hence it is evident, that all fines, imposed by the courts, were to be reported to the senate, who had authority, as is already said, to reduce, or to confirm them. If confirmed, they were paid into the public treasury, in the same manner, as with us, all fines imposed by other courts are estreated¹ into the Exchequer; where the barons, together with the king's council, who are called commissioners of reducement, have power to levy, or reduce them.

The fine being reported to the senate, the person mentioned here, as fined by NEPOS, pleaded for himself. *Egit*

¹ Our manner of estreating is thus. The judges, who impose the fines, certify in parchment the name and abode of the person, the fine imposed, and the cause of imposing it. This parchment is filed in the Exchequer, and becomes a record thereof, and these are called estreats, *quasi extracta* out of the records of the courts, from whence they came,

autem

autem sic, ut deprecaretur : “ But his pleading was nothing more than a deprecation of judgement.” He did not pretend it was illegally imposed, or that his omission of duty could bear any just excuse ; but he had recourse to prayers, submission and entreaties for mercy. The senate remitted the penalty, but not immediately. They suffered him to remain some time in doubt ; nor did they chuse to relieve him from his anxiety, till he had been sufficiently punished by his fears of their determination, and till he had confessed his offence, and had publicly begged their pardon : an example of justice and mercy, highly becoming the senate of *Rome*.

E P I S T L E XXX.

P L I N Y to L I C I N I U S S U R A.

I Have brought to you, out of my own country, instead of a present, a problem, well deserving the attention of your deepest philosophy.

A spring rises in a mountain, it runs down through rocks, and is afterwards received into a banqueting house, artificially formed for that purpose. The force of its current is there a little retarded, and falls from thence into the Larian lake. The nature of this spring is surprizing. Three times in a day it regularly rises, and subsides, in equal degrees of proportion. This is plainly perceivable, and you are at once convinced and delighted. You may lye down by it, and regale yourself with a collation, while the fountain, which is exquisitely cold, supplies you with drink : in the mean time, the spring in equal, and reciprocal periods of time, either ebbs, or flows. If you place a ring, or any thing else in a dry part, near the verge of the fountain, it is gradually washed by the water, and at last covered by it : again, it discovers it to view ; and again, in a little time, retreats entirely from it. If you continue your observation,

servation, you will see the same thing repeated, a second, and a third time. Is there any internal air, which successively relaxes and contracts the orifice and mouth of the fountain, when, by its impulse, it resists, or, by its retreat, it yields to it? This we find is the case in jars, and vessels of that form, which have not a direct and free opening; for these, when either perpendicularly, or obliquely placed, pour out the liquors they contain, with interrupted gulphs, and the sighs, as it were, of a struggling spirit. Or, is the spring under the same influence with the ocean? And is this small collection of water successively contracted and enlarged by the same law, which makes that ebb and flow? Or, is its current repelled, during a certain space of time, by some cause not unlike to contrary winds, and the tide, which, by their opposing force, resist the motion of the rivers into the sea? Or, is there some latent reservoir within, so formed, as to retain a certain quantity of water, which supplies this spring; whose current is diminished and runs slower during the gradual collection of water, but becomes larger and more rapid, when the whole is collected? Or, is it owing (though I comprehend not how) to some hidden balance; which alternately rising and falling, as its equilibrium is varied by being more empty or full, successively rises, or suppresses the motion of the water? Examine (for you can) into the causes of this wonder. It is sufficient for me, if I have given you an exact description of it. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

There are several instances, besides this mentioned by PLINY, of ebbing and flowing springs. As he was first formed in his studies by his uncle PLINY the elder, such a surprizing phænomenon could not fail to strike his mind in the manner he describes; and although the Aristotelian philosophy,

lofophy, which then prevailed, could not afford any rational and fatisfactory folution of fuch an appearance; yet the conjectures, which PLINY offers with great modefty, are fo ingenious, that fome authors, who have fince defcribed thefe reciprocal fountains, have either declined (as too difficult a talk) giving any account of the reafon * of them, or have taken their hypotheses from his conjectures, without mentioning his name. PLINY (amidft the darknefs, in which natural philofophy was enveloped during his time) has certainly more than hinted the real caufe, which, from the beft principles in hydraulics, accounts moft rationally for thefe appearances.

Dr. LEIGH, in his *natural hiftory of Lancashire*, defcribes an ebbing and flowing fpring called *Tideswell*, in the peak of *Derbyshire*, and one more remarkable at *Giglefwig* in *Yorkshire*. He endeavours to account for the flux and reflux from an internal air (of the fame nature with the *Spiritus occultior* in this epiftle) fucceffively choaking up, and relaxing the orifices of the aqueducts, which form the fpring; and which he fupposes to run, not in a direct, but in a fpiral manner.

The caufes of the flux and reflux of the ocean were unknown in the time of PLINY, but may not, perhaps, improperly be taken to explain an appearance, which bears fo near an analogy to it, and is really the only true folution of this reciprocal motion of fome fprings.

The ebbing and flowing of the fea agree evidently with the times of the moon, but yet produced by the united force of attraction of the fun and moon. This operation is immediately on the atmofphere; and therefore the effects will be the fame, in fome certain degree, whether this atmofphere preffes the fea, or particular fountains; for all fluid bodies are in fome meafure influenced by this general law of attraction: and a cubical inch of water fwells and fubfides in proportion with that of the ocean; yet, on this account, in all other collections of water (which have not an immediate communication with the ocean) muft be imperceptible. But where water is conveyed from the ocean to fountains, then, according to the fituation, regularity, or irregularity of fuch paffages, the rifing and falling of the ocean may act differently,

* Vide VARENI Geog. cap. 17. prop. 17.

with

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with regard to the force impressed on the waters issuing from it: and a subsiding ocean may act with greater force on some canals (according to their situation) than a rising one.

But as it does not appear, that this ebbing and flowing well, mentioned by PLINY, had any communication with the sea, or observed the same periods with it of rising or subsiding, (neither in that case would the motions of it have been uniform, but varied in the different times of the day) some other way of accounting for it must be attempted.

All the phænomena of different ebbing and flowing wells have been rationally explained, by supposing them supplied from reservoirs, that have natural siphons, not unlike what HERO ALEXANDRINUS, and other hydraulic writers, have described in a cup, (from its effect called *Tantalus*) which will hold any quantity of water very well, when it is not filled above a certain height marked in the cup; but if it be filled higher, not only the liquor above the mark will run out, but the whole quantity which this vessel contains.

It is beyond doubt, that many mountains abound with caverns of different sizes and forms; and have likewise channels of various shapes, which convey the water from one cavern to another. Such passages, (of whatsoever shape and dimension, or however winding) if they are tight, and run from the lower part of the cavity, first upwards, to a height less than that of the cavern, and then downwards, will be a natural siphon.

And from these causes, probably, was formed PLINY'S miraculous well. He seems to have hinted as much, where he says, *An latentibus venis certa mensura, quæ dum colligit, quod exhausserat, minor rivus, et pigrior; cum collegit, agilior majorque profertur?* "Whether or not, from veins of
" the earth rising to a certain given height, the spring,
" while it again receives the fluid, which it had before
" thrown out, does not seem a less and slower stream?
" When the same quantity of water is quite collected, does
" it not become quicker and larger?"

It is evident, from PLINY'S description, in two or three places of the epistle, especially by the expression, *Ter in die statis auctibus, ac diminutionibus*; and again, *certis dimensisque momentis*, that the ebbing and flowing constantly observed

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observed a fixed, and regular period, three times a day, at equal distances. Therefore, the causes producing it must act in an equal uniform manner: but whether the hints thrown out, in these observations, have given the least light towards those causes, is left, my dear Lord BOYLE, to your determination.

The End of the FOURTH BOOK.





PLINY'S EPISTLES.

BOOK V.

EPISTLE I.

PLINY to CATILIUS SEVERUS.



ASMALL legacy is fallen to me, but more acceptable than the largest. Why more acceptable than the largest? POM-
PONIA GRATILIA having disinherited her son, ASSUDIUS CURIANUS, left me one of her heirs, and appointed SERTORIUS SEVERUS, a man of prætorian order, and other eminent *Roman* knights, coheirs with me. CURIANUS desired, that I would bestow upon him my particular portion, and assist him by that *forejudge-*

ment * of his right, promising, by a secret contract, to secure to me my own share. I answered, that it was not agreeable to my constant practice to do one thing publicly, and another, quite inconsistent with it, in secret. Besides, that it was not honourable to make donations to a person, who was rich, and had no children. In a word, if I made him a present of my part in the manner he desired, it would be no advantage to him; but it might be of service, if I renounced my right, which I was willing to do, if it should appear to me, that he was unjustly disinherited. To this he said, "I desire you would inform yourself of the truth." Pausing a little, I replied, "I will; nor do I see, why I should appear less in my own eye, than I appear in yours: but now remember, that I shall not want courage to pronounce my judgement in favour of your mother, if the fact leads me to be of that opinion." "Do as you please," answered he, "for you will certainly do what is most equitable." I called in two assistants, who were men, at that time, of most distinguished characters in Rome, CORELLIUS, and FRONTINUS. With these on each side of me, I sat as a judge in my chamber. CURIANUS spoke what he thought made most for his purpose. I answered in few words; nor was there any other present to defend the honour of the deceased. I then withdrew to consult with my assistants, and as we had agreed in opinion, I said to him, "CURIANUS, your mother seems to have had just reasons to be angry with you."

* The *præjudicium*, or forejudgement, alludes to the *præjudicium* of the *decumviri*, which had generally an influence on the *centumviri*: Some causes were first judged by the *decumviri*, and afterwards by the *centumviri*; and those were called *præjudiciales*. Thus PLINY'S prejudgement might have had an influence on the coheirs.

After

After this, CURIANUS commenced a suit before the centumviri with the other coheirs, but not with me. The day of hearing approached: my coheirs were willing to compound, and make an end of the contest: not from any diffidence of their cause, but from fear of the times. They were apprehensive of what they had seen happen to many, that while they were defending a civil cause before the centumviri, they should be accused of some capital crime. And there were some amongst them, to whom the friendship both of GRATILLA and RUSTICUS would be objected. They desired me to talk to CURIANUS. We met in the temple of Concord. There I asked him, "If your mother had left you heir to a fourth part of her fortune, could you complain? What if your mother had appointed you heir to her whole fortune, but had so loaded it with legacies, that not more than a fourth part would come clear to you? You ought therefore to be contented, if you, who have been disinherited by your mother, receive a fourth part from her heirs; to which also I will make an addition. You know you commenced no suit against me; and two years are now passed, by which I have obtained a legal and indisputable right. But in order to make you more conformable to my coheirs, and not to let you be a loser by your respect to me, I make you the same offer for my own particular share."

I had the satisfaction not only of discharging a good conscience, but of obtaining glory by it: therefore this same CURIANUS left me a legacy; and (unless perhaps I flatter myself) has distinguished what I did, as an action equally honourable with those of the ancients.

I have written these particulars to you, because I have been used to confer as much with you as with myself, upon all points, that either delighted, or disturbed me. In short, I thought it unkind to de-

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fraud so dear a friend of that pleasure, which I myself enjoyed : nor indeed am I Stoic enough to think it of no consequence, whether I obtain the approbation of others, as a reward for those actions, which, I think, I have performed with honour. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The legacy here spoken of is not, as I apprehend, the legacy from GRATILLA, but from CURIANUS, who was so pleased, and found himself so much obliged by PLINY's conduct with the coheirs of POMPONIA GRATILLA, that dying soon afterwards, he left him, as a token of friendship and gratitude, *Legatum modicum, sed amplissimo gratius* : " He bequeathed him a moderate legacy, but more acceptable than the largest." Nevertheless the light, in which the epistle is generally looked upon, differs extremely from what is now advanced. The commentators all imagine it the legacy of the mother, from which PLINY assumes such honourable joy, and not any bequest from the son : but they are certainly mistaken. ASSUDIUS CURIANUS, admiring the justice, and smitten with the generosity of PLINY, when appointed one of the heirs of POMPONIA GRATILLA, takes an opportunity, at his death, of testifying the high sense he retained of our author's disinterested behaviour : *Ille erga CURIANUS legatum PLINIO reliquit* : " CURIANUS therefore left a legacy to PLINY."

Take the epistle in this sense, and it raises the character of CURIANUS to a high degree. He had been absolutely disinherited by his mother : nevertheless, by the prudent management of PLINY, (for there is prudence, as well as generosity, in the decision) he came in for a share of her wealth, to no part of which he could otherwise have made any just pretension. It is plain, therefore, all his hopes rested either in the iniquity of the times, or the benevolent disposition of the coheirs : whatever he gained from them, must be a free gift ; whatever he gained by law, must be repugnant to equity : *Verebantur, quod videbant multis accidisse, ne ex centumvirali judicio capitis rei exirent* : " They were apprehensive lest they should be capitally condemned by the decree of the centumviri, a fate, which they observed had befallen many others." It was noble there-
fore

fore in CURIANUS to choose the road of justice, and the path of peace. In those sentiments he quitted his design of suing the coheirs, (persons obnoxious probably to the higher powers) and acquiesced in accepting the fourth part of his mother's fortune, which was still more extraordinary, as he had already taken some steps, by commencing a law-suit, towards possessing himself of the whole.

It may be objected, that as the death of CURIANUS is not mentioned in the epistle, we ought to suppose, the legacy to have come from GRATILLA. But the death of CURIANUS was a known circumstance; he was a person of note, the son of ARULENUS RUSTICUS, who had been put to death by DOMITIAN; and therefore PLINY had no need to impart a piece of news to SEVERUS, with which he certainly must be already acquainted. The particulars of the bequest could be known only to few, and PLINY had great reason to be vain (if there can be a reason for vanity) in being appointed coheir by the mother, and in having a legacy bequeathed to him by the son, with whom that mother had lived in so great estrangement, as totally to cut him off from any benefit in her will. It shews, that all persons; although ever so much at variance with each other; agreed mutually in their love, and esteem of our author.

Among the old Romans there were three kinds of wills; *Unum, quod calatis comitiis: alterum, quod in precinctu: tertium, quod per aes et libram appellatum est.*

The first kind were such wills as were made by any persons in the *comitia calata*, an assembly of the people, who were called together for the election and consecration of priests; and, in the more antient times of the common-wealth, for wills made in presence of the people.

The second kind related wholly to the soldiery. *In precinctu facta testamenta, Festo interprete, dicebantur, quæ milites pugnaturi, vel, ut plinius PLUTARCHUS, presentibus sammilitionibus nuncupabant.*

The third kind, *Per aes et libram*, is described by ROSENIUS to be a sort of imaginary, or fictitious sale, by which the seller disposed of all his effects. The buyer gave no consideration, and was only a trustee in the whole affair. But it was required, in making this particular kind of will, that two Roman citizens of mature age, and the ^b *libripens* (an officer, who overlooked the weights and measures, and

^b A libra & pendendo, five ponderando dictus, quasi ponderator.

was an overseer in weighing goods) and the buyer also, in all amounting to seven persons, should be present.

The two first sort of testaments were early laid aside by the Romans; and the third, although it continued longer; yet, according to ^c JUSTINIAN, at length fell into disuse; and another form was instituted, appointing not only seven witnesses to be present, and subscribe their names, but the edict of the prætor to be necessary, and seals to be affixed to every will, that was perfected.

Children were not permitted to make a will, or to devise any legacy by testament, unless what they gained in war, such as soldier's pay, &c. Their lives, their properties, and their liberty, were under the dominion of their parents. JUSTINIAN, in his Institutes, takes particular notice of the unparalleled power, which the Romans had over their children, where he says, *Jus autem potestatis, quod in liberos habemus, proprium est civium Romanorum; nulli enim alii sunt homines, qui talem in liberos habeant potestatem, quam nos habemus*: "But the power and right, which we have over our children, is a property only of the Romans. No other people have jurisdictions of that kind but ourselves." And DIONYSIUS HALICARNASSENSIS informs us, that the Romans had a greater authority over their sons, than the masters over their slaves. A servant once sold, if he obtained a manumission from his new master, became entirely free: but the son was not at his own liberty before he was three times sold by his father, and had received three manumissions from his masters. From hence many acts of arbitrary power arose. The tender yearnings of nature were often obliterated in parents: they gave themselves up to passion and partiality, and disinherited their own offspring from prejudice, without a cause. This seems not to have been the case of GRATILLA; she had disinherited her son CURIANUS by her will; but in all probability had assigned reasons for so doing, the laws at that time requiring it. The son imagined, that upon a trial those reasons might not be confirmed: he applied himself therefore to PLINY in the manner mentioned in this letter; who acted with his usual openness and integrity, rejected all proposals of gain, and avoided the least underhand dealing, or dishonourable compact. Struck, and enamoured, as we said before, with so

^c Vid. JUSTINIAN. de testamentis ordinandis. lib. 2. tit. 10.

^d Lib. 1. tit. 9. §. 2. p. 43.

much virtue, CURIANUS, by a legacy of kindness at his death, gave occasion to this epistle. It appears to have been written in the reign of DOMITIAN; and, in one place particularly, hints at the perils of that dangerous reign.

EPISTLE II.

PLINY to FLACCUS.

I Have received the present of delicate sea-thrushes, to which, during this tempestuous weather, I can send no equivalent, either from the market of *Laurentinum*, or from the sea. A barren letter, which bears no proportion to the favour I have received, is all the return you will find. I cannot even imitate the policy of DIOMEDES in the exchange. But such is your good nature, that in this point you will more easily grant me a pardon, from the frank confession, that I scarce deserve it. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

Many of PLINY's epistles have escaped the flames, merely as they were tokens of certain circumstances necessary for his remembrance; or amusements, by which he might now and then review, what he had express'd to his corresponders upon particular occasions. Of this latter sort seems to be this epistle to FLACCUS. The compliment is genteel, and as much said, as the subject will admit; which although not interesting to us at present, yet perhaps, at the time when written, or preserved, was of some use either to the author, or his friend; or, indeed, might be kept only to remind PLINY, that he owed FLACCUS a present of fish from *Laurentinum*, a debt, which he ought, and intended to pay, as soon as the weather became less tempestuous.

The *turdi* were the sea-thrush; a small spotted fish, not a foot long, of a russet-colour, and in figure like a tench, living among stones and rocks; by which means it was impossible to take them, except in calm weather. They were eaten generally in autumn, and were esteemed a delicacy

* See DACIER'S notes on HORACE, sat. 1. lib. 1.

among

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among the *Romans*. The mention of sea-thrushes reminds us of a ridiculous inn-keeper, described by HORACE in his journey to *Brundisium*, whose excessive officiousness in broiling this kind of fish set his house on fire.

*Tendimus hinc recta Beneventum, ubi fedulus hospes
Pene arsit, macros dum turdos versat in igne :
Nam vaga per veterem dilapso flamma culinam
Vulcano, summum properabat lambere tectum
Convivas avidos cœnam, servosque timentes
Tum rapere, atque omnes restringere velle videres †.*

“ To Beneventum next our journey lay,
“ Our journey ended with the close of day ;
“ The busy landlord sweating bad prepare
“ Some lean sea-thrushes, small, but welcome fare,
“ From cover'd embers new-blown flames arise,
“ And wood on wood th' officious host supplies,
“ Till old and foul, with foot of years replete,
“ The chimæy kindled with unusual heat ;
“ A larger vent the furious flame demands,
“ Back rolls the tempest on the feeder's hands :
“ Then mounting upwards with tremendous blaze
“ Seizes the beam, and round the cieling plays :
“ Amaz'd, confus'd, guests, servants, all conspire
“ To save the supper first, then quench the fire.”

† HOR. lib. 1. sat. 5.

EPISTLE III.

PLINY to ARISTO.

AT the same time, that your numerous acts of friendship are extremely grateful, and agreeable to me, scarce any one of them has pleased me more, than your not concealing from me, the many and copious disputes, relating to my verses, at your house ; which were still lengthened out by the various opinions of the critics. Amongst whom there were some, who did not condemn the poems themselves, yet

yet blamed me (but in a very friendly and sincere manner) for having written and repeated publicly verses of that kind; to whose censure, (although I thereby render myself more blameable,) I make this answer: My poetical compositions are sometimes not the gravest: I write comedies, I frequent pantomimes, I read lyrics, I unravel the mysteries of fatir; and besides, I now and then indulge myself in laughing, joking, playing; and, in one word, to shew I take some delight in all innocent recreations, I am a man. Nor can it give me any concern, that such judges should entertain so bad an opinion of my morals, and be so much surprized at my writings, when they are ignorant enough not to know, that the most learned, the gravest, and the chastest authors have written in the same way. But I am convinced I shall easily obtain permission from those, who are well acquainted with the value, and the number of the authors, in whose steps I tread, to err with companions, whom it is honourable to imitate, not only in their serious, but also in their diverting compositions. Shall I be afraid, (I will name none among the living, lest I subject myself to an appearance of flattery) I say, shall I fear, that what became TULLY, CALVUS, POLLIO, MESSALA, HORTENSIVS, BRUTUS, SYLLA, CATULUS, SCÆVOLA, SULPITIUS, VARRO, TORQUATUS, even all the Torquati, MEMMIUS, LENTULUS, GÆTULICUS, SENECA, and last of all, VERGINIVS RUFUS, should be indecent in me? And, if private examples will not suffice, let me name the Cæsars, JULIUS, AUGUSTUS, NERVA, and TITUS; for I pass by NERO: although I know, that those writings do not necessarily become corrupted, which are written even by the worst of men, but I also know, that those remain always pure, which are written by virtuous men; among whom ought particularly to be mentioned, VIRGIL and CORNELIVS NEPOS, but first I should have said ACCIVS and

and ENNIUS. These were not senators, but purity of manners equals all ranks. I indeed rehearse my compositions, but know not, whether they rehearsed, or not. True, but they might rest satisfied in their own judgement; my sentiments of myself are more modest, than to think any work sufficiently perfect, that has only my own approbation. For these reasons therefore I rehearse; first, because whoever recites in public, looks over, and examines his writings with a severer eye, out of deference to his audience: then again, if he has any doubts, they are determined, as it were, by the opinion and advice of his auditors. He meets with many admonitions from different persons; or, if not, he perceives the sentiments of every particular person by the countenance, the eyes, a nod, a motion of the hand, a murmur, a dead silence; all which lead him easily to distinguish judgement from complaisance. And from hence it is, that if any one of those, who were present at my rehearsal, should have the curiosity to read what I then repeated, he will perceive, that I have either changed, or erased some particular passages, merely, perhaps, in compliance to his judgement, although he never spoke one syllable to me. But I am reasoning on this subject, as if I did not select a few friends into a private chamber, but summoned the people, as it were, to a public auditory; and to have a numerous set of friends has been a glory to many men, a reproach to none. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The fondness and partiality of an author towards his own compositions are apparently visible in this letter. ARISTO had amicably sent PLINY an account, that at his house some criticisms had passed in conversation, not so much against certain poems written by our author, as against the subjects, of which they treated: indecent subjects, and consequently improper to be rehearsed in public; particularly by
a man

a man of *PLINY*'s character. This account displeases him, and he immediately professes himself under no concern for the opinion of such persons, whose ignorance hindered them from knowing, that many greater authors had their hours of relaxation, and, by way of amusement, had composed many poems, as gay, diverting, and wanton, as ever were the product of *PLINY*'s pen. But had he considered with that coolness and candour, of which, in any other case, he could not have failed, he must have owned, that wrong actions are not to be defended, either by names, or numbers. Vicious examples may receive a stamp from fashion; and, like counterfeit metals, at their first appearance may dazzle, and pass for gold, till time, that irresistible discoverer of falsehood, rubs off the gloss, and reveals their baseness. Authors therefore should weigh well the patterns they wish to follow, and consider whose steps they chuse to tread; or, to use a very trite comparison, let them imitate the industrious bee, who ranges from flower to flower, and tastes every vegetable of the field, and garden; yet in his progress extracts nothing but sweets, not even from the aloes, or the colocynth.

E P I S T L E IV.

PLINY to VALERIANUS.

THERE has lately happened an affair, of little consequence in itself, but which has introduced a matter of much weight. *SOLERS*, a man of prætorian dignity, petitioned the senate, for liberty to hold a fair on his estate. The legates of the *Vicentini* opposed it. *TUSCILLUS NOMINATUS* appeared as their advocate: the cause was adjourned over. At another meeting of the senate, the *Vicentini* came in without an advocate: They said, they had been deceived: whether they really thought so, or whether this was only a hasty expression, I do not know. They were asked by the prætor *NEPOS*, "What person they had employed?" They answered, "Their former advocate." They were then asked,
 " If

“ If he had appeared without a fair ?” They answered, “ He had received for thousand sesterces.” They were asked, “ If they had see'd him a second time ?” They said, “ With a thousand denarij.” NEPOS insisted, that NOMINATUS should be summoned to appear, and answer this charge. Thus far they proceeded that day. But, as well as I can judge, the affair will not rest here. For many things, when but just touched, and lightly put into motion, spread themselves by degrees most diffusively.

I have raised your expectation, as much as I ought for the present, that you may kindly desire me to inform you of the consequences; unless your curiosity should bring you to *Rome* before-hand, and you should chuse rather to be a spectator, than a reader, of the farther proceedings in that affair. Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

The observations upon this letter will come more properly under the fourteenth epistle of this book, where the cause between the Vicentian legates, and TUSCILLUS NOMINATUS, is more fully discussed, and the issue of it determined. However, we may here take notice, that no fairs could be held among the *Romans*, but by public authority. And before such permission was allowed, any persons, who thought they should be aggrieved by it, had a right to oppose the grant. This is agreeable to the usage and practice with us at this day: for whoever is desirous to have fairs held upon his estate, must petition the government; on such petition a writ *ad quod damnum* is issued, and directed to the sheriff of the county, who summons a jury, to find upon their oaths, whether any, and what detriment will arise by granting the fairs desired: and the sheriff makes a return accordingly, upon which the prayer of the petition is either granted, or rejected.

NEPOS the prætor, who is mentioned here, acts agreeably to the character given of him, in the twenty-ninth epistle of

* Equal to 48 l. 8 s. 9 d.

* Equal to 32 l. 5 s. 10 d.

the fourth book; *Acer et fortis vir*: "A man of resolution and severity." He is resolved not to let any fraud, or negligence, escape the notice and examination of the senate; and therefore insists, that NOMINATUS shall make his personal appearance, to answer the charge against him, the consequence of which, as has been already hinted, will be made known to us hereafter.

EPISTLE V.

PLINY to MAXIMUS.

I Am told, that CAIUS FANNIUS is dead: the news grieves me very much. First, because I loved so polite and so learned a man; next, because I used frequently to consult and advise with him. For he was by nature of a penetrating genius, improved by experience, and for that reason was never at a loss for an expedient. But his death afflicts me upon other accounts. He died without revoking an old will; by which means he has omitted the persons, whom he loved best; and has obliged others, for whom he had the least regard. This, however, is tolerable. It is a much greater misfortune, that he left a most noble work unfinished. For although his time was mostly taken up by his avocations, as a lawyer, yet he wrote the several catastrophes of all those, who were murdered, or banished by NERO, and had finished three books with great wit, exactness, and purity of style, between the plain narrative and the historical. And he was still more desirous to give the finishing stroke to what remained, by perceiving the eagerness, with which those already published were read.

To me, I confess, the death of men, who are preparing some work of immortality, always seems severe and immature. For those, who are intirely devoted to pleasures, live, as if their lives were to end with the day, and every day convince the world, they deserve

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serve to die. But to those, who think of posterity, and extend the memory of themselves to future generations by their writings, death, at any time, must approach too soon; as it must always break off the thread of some useful work.

CAIUS FANNIUS had a pre-sentiment of what has happened, long before he died. He dreamt one night, that he lay on his couch, in an undress fit for study, with a desk, as usual, before him: NERO, as he imagined, came in; sat upon the couch, took up the first book, which FANNIUS had published concerning the cruelties of NERO's reign, and turned it over from the beginning to the end: He did the same with the second, and the third book, and then vanished. FANNIUS was much terrified, and thus interpreted the dream, that the same abrupt end should happen to his historical design, as had happened to NERO's reading; and so the event proved.

This makes me reflect, with great concern, what an infinite deal of pains and labour he has expended to no purpose. My own mortality, my own writings occur to my mind. Nor can I doubt but you must have the same alarms for your unfinished pieces. Let us endeavour therefore, whilst life permits, that as few of our writings as possible may be found, within the power of death to demolish. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

CAIUS FANNIUS is not mentioned by any of his contemporaries, except PLINY. Yet he is spoken of so advantageously in this epistle, that we must regret the loss of his history, although he died before he had brought it to perfection. Upon these occasions, when it is evident, that for want of the art of printing, many valuable works have been utterly destroyed, we naturally wish that typography had been known in the earliest ages of the world. On the other hand, it must be owned, that the press is sometimes applied to an ill use, and is made the channel, through which
falshoods

fallhoods and scurrilities flow in too violent a torrent. Yet, however injurious the unlimited licence of printing may prove to particular persons, the liberty itself is of too great benefit to the public in general, either to be abolished, or restrained. The dread of being exposed to the world may strike an awe into those breasts, that are hardened and petrified against all impressions of conscience, morality, or honour. And I am apt to believe, if *SENeca* and *BURRHUS* had inculcated into *NERO* the dictates of shame, and the terrors of infamy and reproach, *CAIUS FANNIUS* had not only wanted the melancholy materials, of which his history was to be composed, but a deluge of *Roman* blood might have been saved; and *NERO*, from the motive of fear, might have acted consistently with the principles of virtue. Man is more immediately afraid of man, than of God: which made *Sir T. B.* reply to his friend, who reproached him for taking the oaths, "By my faith, I would rather trust God with my soul hereafter, than the king with my estate at present."

Exitus occisorum, aut relegatorum a NERONE. The history must have been very voluminous, which was to contain an account of all who were banished, and murdered by *NERO*. But it seems astonishing, that the *Romans*, who were jealous of tyranny, and absolute dominion, in the person of *JULIUS CÆSAR*, should so far degenerate from themselves, as not to have either sense, spirit, or conduct sufficient to stop the many acts of cruelty and oppression, which were frequently, if not constantly practised by *TYBERIUS*, *CALIGULA*, *CLAUDIUS*, and *NERO*. Is it not a melancholy consideration to recollect, that the godlike *JULIUS* fell by three and twenty wounds; and the infernal *NERO* lived to complain, "he had neither friend nor foe to kill him?"

EPISTLE VI.

PLINY to APOLLINARIS.

I Am much delighted with the care and anxiety you have expressed, in persuading me not to pass the summer, as I intended, in *Tuscany*, merely because you imagine the place unhealthy. The sea-shore of

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D d

Tuscany

Tuscany is certainly moist, and unwholesome. But my lands lie at a distance from the ocean, and are placed under the healthiest of our mountains, the *Apennine*; and therefore, that you may lay aside all your anxiety for me, attend to the temperature of the climate, the situation of the country, and the sweetness of my particular dwelling. I shall give you the description with no less pleasure, than you will hear it.

The air in the winter is sharp and frosty: myrtles, olives, and such plants, as require a constant warmth, will not grow there. The laurel generally thrives, and sometimes produces a very beautiful green, although now and then it is killed, but not more frequently than with us at *Rome*. The heat in summer is very moderate. There is always some air stirring abroad, but oftner gentle than stormy. To this I attribute the number of our old men. Here you see the grandfathers and great grandfathers of those, who are now young men. You hear old stories, and the speeches of our ancestors. So that were you to come hither, you would think yourself in another age.

The face of the country is extremely beautiful: imagine to yourself an amphitheatre of immense circumference, such as could be formed only by the hand of nature. A wide-extended plain is surrounded by mountains, whose summits are covered with tall ancient woods, stocked with game for all kinds of hunting. The descent is planted with underwoods, among which are frequently little risings, of a rich and deep soil; where a stone, if sought for, is scarce to be found: in fertility, they yield not to the finest vales, and produce as good crops of corn, although not so early in the year. Below these, on the side of the mountain, is a continued range of vineyards, that extend themselves, without interruption, far and near; at the foot of which is a sort of border of shrubs. From thence you have meadows and open fields.

fields. The arable grounds require large oxen, and the strongest ploughs. The earth is so tough, and rises in such large clods, when it is first broken up, that it cannot be reduced, till it has been ploughed nine times. The meadows glitter with flowers, and produce the trefoil, and other kinds of grass, always soft, and tender, and appearing always new; for they are excellently well watered, with never-failing springs; yet where these springs are in greatest confluence, they make no marshes; the declivity of the land discharging into the *Tiber* all the water, that it does not drink in.

The *Tiber* runs through the middle of our lands; is navigable, and supplies the city from hence with all kinds of grain, but only in winter, and spring; for in summer it shrinks to nothing, leaving the bare name of a great river to almost an empty channel. In autumn it rises to its usual height.

You would be much delighted, were you to take a prospect of this place from a neighbouring mountain, as you would scarce believe you were looking upon a real country, but a landskip drawn with all the beauties imaginable; with so charming a representation, and such a variety of agreeable objects, will your eyes be regaled, which ever way they turn.

My house, although built at the foot of a hill, has a view, as if it stood upon the brow of it. The ascent is so gradual, and easy, that you find yourself on the top, almost before you perceive yourself ascending. Behind it, but at a distance, is the *Apennine* mountain, from whence it is refreshed with continual breezes, be the weather ever so calm, or still; and yet they are not too cutting or immoderate, but broken and weakened by the very distance. The largest part of the house lies to the south, and enjoys the sun all the afternoon; but something earlier in the winter, than in the summer. In the front of it is a portico, pretty large, and of a proportionable

sun ; the third less exposed, although full as light. Over the undressing room is a tennis-court, which is accommodated to several sorts of exercise, by means of the several circles, which are made in it. Not far from the baths is a stair-case, that leads into a close gallery, at the entrance of which are three apartments : one looks into the little court, where the four plane-trees are : another into the meadow ; and the third has a view of several vineyards : so that each has a different prospect, and looks towards a different point of the heavens. At the upper end of the gallery is a bed-chamber, taken out of the gallery itself. It has a prospect of the horse-course, the vineyards, and the mountains. To this joins a bed-chamber, which is open to the sun, especially in winter. From hence another apartment, between the horse-course and the dwelling-house. All this makes the front.

On the south side is a close gallery of a considerable height from the ground ; from whence the vineyards appear so near, that you seem almost to touch them. In the middle of it a large dining-room receives a very wholesom air from the vallies of the *Apennine* : in the back front, from the largest windows, and the folding doors, you have a view of the vineyards, through the gallery. On that side of the dining-room, which has no windows, is a private stair-case, which we make use of for serving up an entertainment, when I sup there : the gallery ends in a bed-chamber, beautified by the prospect both of the gallery itself, and of the vineyards.

Underneath is another gallery, much like a subterraneous passage. In summer it is perfectly cool ; and having sufficient air within itself, neither wants, nor admits any from without. After both these galleries, at the end of the dining-room, is an open portico, cool in the forepart of the day, but exposed to the sun in the afternoon. Through this you go
into

into two different apartments, one of which contains four, the other three chambers; all which enjoy, in their turns, both the sun-shine and the shade.

This disposition of the several parts of the house is extremely delightful; although it equals, in no degree, the beauty of the horse-course, which is a large open area, presenting itself intire, at one view, to the eyes of the beholder. It is set round with plane-trees, which are covered with ivy; and as their tops flourish by their own beauty, so, towards the bottom, their verdure is borrowed from the ivy, that runs over the trunk and the branches, and spreading itself from one tree to another, joins them together. The vacancy between the bodies of the trees is filled up with box; which is again surrounded by a lawrel hedge, vying in shade with the platans. This strait boundary of the horse-course changes its figure, at the end, into a semi-circle; which is set round, and covered with cypress-trees, composing a thicker and more gloomy shade than the former hedge. The inner circles (for there are many of them) enjoy the clearest day. They are filled with plenty of roses, and relieve you from the chillness of the shade, with the agreeable warmth of the sun.

When you are arrived at the end of all these winding alleys, you come out into a strait walk; nay, not into one, but into several; divided, in some places, by grass-plots, in others by box-trees, cut into a thousand shapes; some of which are letters forming my name; and others the name of my gardiner. In these are mixt, alternately, small pyramids and apple-trees; and now and then, in the midst of a plot, improved with all imaginable art, you meet, on a sudden, with a spot of ground, wild, and uncultivated, as if transplanted hither on purpose. The middle space is adorned on both sides with dwarf plane-trees. Beyond these again is an *Acanthus*, that waves and bends under your hand; and then again

various figures, and various names. At the upper end is a couch made of white marble, over which a vine, supported by four small pillars of *Carysian* marble, forms an arbour. From the couch several pipes spout forth water, as if forced out by the weight of those who lye down. It falls first into a stone cistern, and from thence into a marble bason, and is so managed by pipes under ground, that it keeps the bason always full, without ever running over. When I sup here, the more substantial dishes are placed upon the border of the bason, whilst the lesser float in the water, in the shape of little boats and birds. Over against this is a fountain, which throws up water, and receives it back again. The apertures, that swallow it, and return it, communicate with each other.

Opposite to the marble couch stands a bed-chamber, which gives an ornament to that couch equal to what it receives from it. This room is beautified with marble; the doors project, and are surrounded with greens. The windows, both above and below, are shaded on every side with the same. Within this chamber is a little closet, that appears to belong to another room. Here is a bed, and windows on every side, which let in but a gloomy sort of a light, being obscured by the shade of a most luxuriant vine, which ascends, and covers the whole building from the bottom to the very roof. You may lie here as in a grove, only more secure from rain. Here also rises a fountain, which immediately disappears. In many places of the walks and alleys are marble seats, disposed at convenient distances; upon which, when you are tired with walking, you may rest yourself with as much ease as in the chamber. Near these seats are little fountains. In every part of the horse-course you hear the murmur of water, conveyed through pipes by the hand of the artificer, in such a manner as best pleased his fancy.

This

This serves to water my greens, sometimes in one part, sometimes in another, and sometimes in all parts at once. I should have ended before now, for fear of seeming tedious, had I not been determined thus to walk over every corner with you in my letter : nor did I apprehend you would be tired in reading, what would not tire you in seeing ; especially as you may rest, and, by laying down my epistle, relieve yourself as often as you please. Besides, I was willing to indulge myself in the description of what I love ; for I am particularly fond of places, which I have either laid out myself, or have finished, when begun by others. In a word, (for why should I unbosom to you my thoughts, whether right or wrong ?) I always look upon it, as the chief duty of a writer, to keep a close eye to his title, and often ask himself what he has proposed to treat of ; well knowing, while he confines himself to his subject, he cannot seem long ; but if he deviates in the least, and launches out into any foreign matter, he must appear exceedingly tedious. You see how many lines are employed by HŒMER and VIRGIL, the one in describing the arms of ÆNEAS, the other of ACHILLES ; yet neither of these poets are too prolix, because each fulfils his original intention. You see in what manner ARATUS ° has searched out and numbered the smallest stars ; yet he preserves himself from the character of too voluminous an author ; for he never rambles, but keeps close to his work. In like manner, (to compare small things with great) whilst I was endeavouring to place before your eyes a compleat description of my feat, if I have never deviated from the subject, nor related what was foreign to my

° ARATUS was not only an astrologer, but a poet. He was born in *Cilicia*, and flourished about the beginning of the 124th olympiad. His *Greek verses* are translated by TULLY in the second book, *De naturâ Deorum*. The translation is the work, as the author himself observes, of a very young man.

purpose,

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purpose, it is not the description of my house, but my house itself, that is large.

But to return where I began, lest I should be justly condemned by my own law, if I continue longer in this digression; you now see the reasons, why I prefer my seat in *Tuscany* to those I have at *Tusculum*, *Tibur*, and *Praneste*; for, besides what I have already told you, the repose I enjoy here is more quiet and undisturbed, than any where else. No summons to the bar; no clients at my gate; all is calm and still; which added to the healthiness of the place, the clearness of the sky, and the softness of the air, makes me enjoy the greatest vigour, both of body and mind. The one is kept in exercise by hunting, the other by study. Besides, my family are never in better health than here. To this very day (in a lucky moment be it spoken) I have not lost one of all the retinue I brought with me. May the Gods continue this happiness to me, and this glory to the place itself. Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

A more enamoured description cannot be given of a place, than we find of PLINY'S *Tuscan* villa in this epistle. Here again, as at *Laurentinum*, the lover dwells upon the charms of his mistress; he views in rapture every feature, and seems uneasy, lest she should not appear equally amiable to others, as to himself. That state of love must certainly be happy, where jealousy can find no intrusion.

Monsieur FELIBIEN, in his remarks upon PLINY'S two country houses, observes, that the *Tuscan* villa was preferred by our author to *Laurentinum*; not only because the former was a larger, and more spacious house than the latter, but because he had a noble estate there, and little or none at *Laurentinum*. To this another reason may plausibly be subjoined; the retirement in *Tuscany* was greater than at *Laurentinum*. PLINY indeed complains, in the fifteenth epistle of the ninth book, that even in *Tuscany* his studies were frequently interrupted by petitions, and complaints from

from his tenants. It is certain, to a studious, and a delicate mind, no retirement can be too private; no solitude too obscure: and therefore the greater the distance from the metropolis, the more complete will be the scene of tranquillity.

The place, where PLINY's house stood, is pointed out to us in a map of the antient *Tuscany*, by ORTELIUS², who fixes it in the neighbourhood of *Tifernum Tiberinum*, close to the *Tiber*: PLINY mentions that river, as running through the middle of his estate; but gives us not the least hint to imagine, that either his house, or his garden, had a view of the *Tiber*; which one or the other must have had, according to ORTELIUS¹. So ornamental a circumstance, if true, would scarce have been omitted by PLINY; but the geographical situation, and the various plans of the *Tuscan* villa are, like those of *Laurentinum*, the works of imagination. Time has destroyed all remains of both these houses; and, to speak ingenuously, it is impossible to rebuild them exactly, even upon paper, by any materials, that can be found in either of the epistles. The author is so hurried away by the ostentatious pleasure of having two such houses, that he has left the dimensions of each apartment to be supplied by modern architects.

It is worthy of observation, with how great attention the *Romans* studied to let in the sun in winter, and to defend themselves from the violent heat of it in summer. The latter is as necessary a precaution in the *Italian* climates, as the contrary is requisite in our northern territories.

A tergo Apenninum. The *Apennine*, although spoken of as a single hill, signifies that chain of mountains, which lye between the *Tyrrhene*, and the *Adriatic* Sea³, and divide the seventh from the eighth region of *Italy*⁴. At the entrance of *Tuscany* they are particularly high; and the highest

¹ See the collection of maps published by HORNIUS, map 42.

² ABRAHAM ORTELIUS was a native of *Antwerp*. He was perfectly well skilled in mathematics and geography. He died *anno* 1598, in the seventy first year of his age.

³ *Mons inter geminas medius se porrigit undas
Inferni superique maris.*

LUCAN. Pharf. lib. 2. v. 399.

⁴ *Italy* was divided into eleven regions, or provinces, by AUGUSTUS,

of the whole group has given one general denomination to all the rest †. The description of the *Apennine*, by LUCAN, is poetical and instructive †.

Ante porticum xystus, concisus in plurimas species. The *xystus* in this epistle, and in the description of *Laurentium*, answers nearest to the idea we have of a terrace, upon which trees were planted, cut into several shapes, according to the fashion of those times. The difference between the *xysti*, and the *xysta*, has been elsewhere explained †. They were places for public wrestlers; but the *xystus*, in a private garden, seems so correspondent to a terrace, that it will scarce bear any other signification. “Before the porch of my house,” says PLINY, “is a terrace, edged with box; upon it are trees, formed into a variety of different figures.”

Acanthus in plano mollis, et, pene dixerim, liquidus. The *acanthus* is mentioned twice in this epistle; each time, in such a manner, as shews it to have been, whether tree or plant, a very curious vegetable. In this place, it evidently appears to have been a tree, because situated by itself, *ambit hunc ambulatio*, “with a walk round it.” In another part of this epistle, PLINY says, *post has acanthus*; the word *has* is relative to plane-trees, spoken of in the preceding sentence. So that the construction may run thus: “After the group of plane-trees, we come to a single tree, the *acanthus*.” Dr. POCOCKE, in his description of the east †, gives us a remarkable account of the *acanthus*: “setting out,” says he, “from *Grand Cairo*, to *Aikmin* in a small hired boat, I was shewn on the height, which is to the south of the narrow eastern plain, a ruined tower, which they call the tower of king ANTAR. Before we came to this place, we had OSMAN to the west. About this place possibly might be *Acanthus*, where STRABO seems to say, there was a temple of OSIRIS, and a wood of *Thebaic acantha*, which produced gums. This probably was *acacia*, the *Thebaic acantha* or bush: and it is not improbable, that the city itself had its name from this wood. This tree is very common in *Egypt*, under the name of *fount*, and

† Each mountain has a particular name, as, *Il monte san Antonio*: *Il monte san Tadoro*: *Il monte acuto*, &c. &c.

‡ From the 396th to the 449th line of the *Pharjalia* book 2d.

† In the essay on the life of PLINY.

‡ Book 2. chap. 1. p. 69. vol. 1.

“ is the same as the *acacia*, called *cyale* in *Arabia Petraea*,
 “ which, I am informed, produces the gum *Ægyptian*, or
 “ *Arabic*.”

The Doctor, in his account of the trees of *Ægypt*¹, farther tells us, that there is “ a tree called *sount*, which
 “ seems to be a species of the *acacia* : it bears a sort of key
 “ or pod, which they use in tanning their leather, instead
 “ of bark. There is another sort of it in their gardens
 “ called *setneh* ; it seems to be the *acacia* of *Italy*, called
 “ *agazia* by the *Italians* : it is esteem’d, because of a sweet
 “ yellow ^a flower it bears ; but the roots of it, opened
 “ and bruised, send forth such a disagreeable smell, that it
 “ infects the air for a considerable distance.” And, in
 another place, the same author informs us², that among
 the trees of *Arabia Petraea* is “ the *acacia*, which the *Arabs*
 “ here call *cyale* ; and I believe, says he, is the same, that
 “ is called *sount* in *Ægypt* ; it is certain, that they collect
 “ the gum *acacia* from it.”

I have been more particular in my quotations from Dr.
 РОССОКЪ, that I might endeavour to reconcile the epithets
 of *mollis* and *liquidus* to the *Ægyptian* tree, which, the Doc-
 tor says, was called *sount* in *Ægypt* ; in *Italy*, *agazia*, and
 in *Arabia Petraea*, *cyale* : this, in all probability, was the
acanthus of PLINY. The epithet *mollis* seems applicable to
 the nature of the wood, which is generally soft in trees,
 that produce turpentine and gum : the epithet *liquidus* re-
 fers to the juice, that oozes through the pores of the tree,
 and is *pene liquidus*, almost transparent. In the other part
 of this epistle^b, where *acanthus* is mentioned, the epithets
 are different : *Post has, acanthus hinc inde lubricus et flexuosus*.
 These seem to express, in many respects, the same qualities
 with the preceding epithets ; they answer to the description
 of the *acanthus* by VIRGIL.

¹ Book 4. chap. 8. p. 205.

² This is exactly correspondent with the description in VIRGIL.
 ÆN. 1. 7. 653.

Et circumtextum croceo velamen acantho.

^a Book 3. chap. 3. p. 154.

^b P. 350. editio LONGOLII.

Et molli circum est ansus amplius acantha.

“and bound”

“With soft *Acanthus* either hand-round.”

And again,

Aut flosi tenuiffimo datus acanthi.

“Or left unsung *Acanthus* flosile twig.”

The older PLINY, in his *Natural History*, calls the *Acanthus*, *topiaria*, a vegetable, that is proper to be formed into shape; which corresponds with the *flosus*, and *feruofus* of VIRGIL, and of PLINY. The word *lubricus* fectis referable to the smoothness of the tree, which appeared even; the leaves yielding to the hand, like feathers, and gliding all together in one continued smooth surface, as they might accidentally be put in motion, backwards and forwards, [hinc inde] by the wind, or by any other cause. Mr. MARTYN, in his *English* notes upon VIRGIL'S *Georgics*, gives the description of this tree from THEOPHRASTUS: but it is there said to be full of prickles, except in the trunk; a circumstance, by no means answerable to the description of the *acanthus* in this epistle; and therefore it may reasonably be supposed to be another sort of the *acanthus*; for, it is certain, there were different kinds of this vegetable; and the softer species may, without too great a latitude of guessing, be deemed the *Italian oxania*, which bears yellow round flowers, like those of a very common plant in our gardens, called *double sneeze-wort*. Such a tree must have been sufficiently beautiful, and *smiling*, to be placed in a particular

^c Eclog. 3. v. 45.

^d Georgic. 4. v. 123.

^e PLINII hist. natural. l. 22. cap. 22. says, there were two sorts of it, *aculeatum* & *crispum*, alterum *leve*, &c. This kind, mentioned by PLINY in this epistle, seems to be of the sort called *leve*.

^f Georg. lib. 2. v. 119. Mr. MARTYN describes the plant, and shrub called *acanthus*, in his notes on Georgic. lib. 4. v. 123.

^g *Mixtaque ridenti colocasia fundet acantho.*

VIRG. Ecl. 4. v. 20.

spot of ground alone, and distinguished from the rest, as one of the curious exotics in PLINY'S garden.

Gestatio in modum circi. It is evident that the *gestatio*, in all authors, signifies a place appropriated for exercise in a vehicle, or on horseback. The *gestatio*, mentioned in this letter, was not, we find, entirely round; it was *in modum circi*, "in the form of the circus," oblong. But the seventh epistle of the ninth book will afford another occasion of speaking of the *gestatio*, and therefore no farther dissertation need be made upon it here.

Hac adjacentis hippodromi nemus. The *hippodromus*, from the derivation of the word, signifies a place intirely adapted to the exercise of horses. In this, as in the preceding instances, the grandeur and magnificence of PLINY'S seat in Tuscany most evidently appear. It seems, like the mind of the master, to have been nobly appropriated to the pleasure, repose, and amusement of all his friends.

Est et aliud cubiculum, marmore excultum podio tenus: "There is another chamber built with marble to the height of the balcony." The *podium* was a balcony, a projection supported by pillars, or consoles, and encompassed by a balustrade. The bed-chamber, here mentioned, must have been particularly delightful and elegant, as the *podium* was always supposed to command a fine prospect; and the richness is expressed by the marble with which it was adorned.

In capite fibadium candido marmore vite protegitur, vitem quatuor columella Carystica subeunt: "The couch itself made of white marble is covered by a vine, which twists round four columns of Carystian marble." This seems to have been the most beautiful, and the most expensive summer-house in PLINY'S garden. The couch [*fibadium*] was perhaps of Parian marble, which was perfectly white, and of which the Grecians formed their finest statues: the columns were of another curious kind of marble, in high estimation among the Romans, brought from Carystus^a, a town of

^a In a commentary upon VITRUVIUS there is a quotation from BARBARUS (HERMOLAUS BARBARUS, grandson of the famous FRANCIS BARBARUS) giving an explanation of the *podium*, which is mentioned by VITRUVIUS, lib. 3. cap. 3. Vide *Lexicon VITRUVIANUM* à BARNALDINO BALDO.

^b Vide PLIN. Nat. Hist. lib. 36. cap. 6.

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*Ischia*¹, one of the largest islands in the *Ægean sea*². But there are several ornamental parts of the garden, which shew a diminutive, rather than a just taste; such as little fountains, and dishes floating in the shape of boats and birds; and the whole, although in many places splendid and great, seems inferior to our chief seats in *England*, which are scarce equalled, and, I believe, not out-done in any parts of the known world.

¹ *Negropont*, now subject to the *Turks*.

² The *Archipelago*.

EPISTLE VII.

PLINY to CALVISIUS.

IT is evident the republic can neither be instituted heir, nor take any thing by way of legacy: but SATURNINUS, who left us his heirs, gave a fourth part to our commonwealth¹: afterwards, instead of a fourth part, he bequeathed four hundred thousand sesterces². If you consider the law, this legacy is void; if you consult the will of the deceased, it is firm and valid. But the will of the deceased (I fear what I am going to say will not be very acceptable to the lawyers) is of greater authority with me, than the law; especially in respect of what was designed to go to our common country. Shall I, out of this adventitious increase of my fortune, refuse our republic four hundred thousand sesterces, which is but a little more than the third part³ of what I bestowed on her by a free gift? I know you will not differ

¹ *Comum*.

² *Quadringent. millium*: Four hundred thousand *l. s. d.*
sesterces, equal to 3229 3 4

³ *Sesertium undecies*: Eleven hundred thousand
sesterces, equal to 8880 4 2

PLINY'S donation was 8880 *l.* one third of which is 2960 *l.*

The legacy of SATURNINUS to COMUM was 3229 *l.* which is 269 *l.* more than a third part of PLINY'S gift.

from

from me in opinion, since you have that love for our country, which the best of citizens ought to have.

I would have you therefore, at the next meeting of the Decuriones, inform them what the law is; but briefly and modestly: then add, that we offer them the four hundred thousand sesterces, as SATURNINUS commanded. Let it be called his gift, his liberality, and only our obedience.

I have avoided writing in a public manner upon this affair; first, because I well know, from the intimacy of our friendship, and the greatness of your prudence, you would be both obliged, and enabled to discharge my part and your own. Then again, because I was apprehensive that I might not preserve, in a letter, that moderation, which you could more easily maintain in a speech. For the countenance, gesture, and voice itself, serve to fix the meaning of a speech: a letter, deprived of all these advantages, lies exposed to the malignity of interpreters. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

This epistle was occasioned by a clause in the will of SATURNINUS, who had bequeathed to the republic of the *Comensians* a fourth part of his fortune: but afterwards, in lieu thereof, he devised them four hundred thousand sesterces, and had likewise appointed PLINY and CALVISIUS, to whom the epistle is addressed, his coheirs.

We learn here, from our author's own assertion, that municipal commonwealths, such as *Comum*, could not receive legacies, or become heirs. The reason of that law is not mentioned in this epistle; but it appears to have been the law by what JUSTINIAN says, in his ^o Institutes, discoursing of those, who are capable of receiving legacies, *Legari autem illis solum potest, cum quibus testamenti factio est*: "Such persons only can receive a legacy, who have, by law, a right in themselves to make a will." A republic, or any body corporate, cannot make a will, because it

^o *De Legatis*. lib. 2. tit. 20.

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never dies ; and it is an established maxim, *quod non potest esse testamentum viventis* : nor can a republic be made heir, because it is a fluctuating body.

The governors of it are alternate and uncertain. The benefit therefore arising to the *Comensians*, from the will of SATURNINUS, seems to have been frustrated, by the gift being devised to the commonwealth in general, and not to any particular use or purpose. But whatever legal flaws, or impediments, might have hindered the people of *Comum* from enjoying a bequest, certainly designed and allotted to them by SATURNINUS, they had the happiness of finding PLINY superior to all such forms and subtrefuges. In several preceding letters we have seen how joyfully, and how minutely he fulfilled, and perfected the unfinished designs, and dying wishes of his deceased friends : but in this instance, there is a particular nobleness in the manner of conveying the legacy to the republic, that even far outshines the bright actions, which, in former epistles, have excited our admiration and applause. *Illius hoc munus ; illius liberalitas : nostrum tantum obsequium vocetur* : " Let it be " thought, says he, that I have only acted in this affair " as an executor, according to my duty, and in obedience " to an indisputable will : let SATURNINUS have the honour of the donation : let it be looked upon as his gift, " as his liberality ; and let us not eclipse the least spark of " his glory : his was the intention ; be his the renown." It is impossible to read such exalted, and such uncommon sentiments, without being warmed into an entire affection for the author ; since, in this epistle, his virtue appears eminently triumphant over one of the mightiest human passions, love of fame.

EPISTLE VIII.

PLINY to CAPITO.

YOU would persuade me to write a history ; nor are you singular in the advice. Many of my friends have often given me the same counsel, and I am willing to follow it ; not because I have confidence in my doing it well, (for that would be the height of presumption,

presumption, unless I had tried) but, because nothing to me appears more eligible, than to conduct these towards the realms of eternity, who ought never to die; and, at once, to extend the characters of others, joined together with our own. For my part, nothing to me, seems of equal consequence with the love and ardency I bear to a lasting reputation. It is a most worthy solicitude; especially when a man is not conscious to himself of any crime, that may make him stand in awe of being transmitted to posterity. My thoughts therefore are employed night and day,

“By what right means to raise my groveling name,
(so far is sufficient for my ambition: what follows is beyond it)

“And rise by gen’ral voice to endless fame”
“Yet oh^a!”

But I am satisfied, since history alone promises almost all I desire. Orations and poetry are not extremely agreeable, unless there is an infinite deal of eloquence contained in them. History, in whatever manner it is written, must please. For men are naturally curious: and are so easily captivated by any new acquisition in the knowledge of facts, that they are even led away by little tales and stories. But a domestic example impels me to this kind of study. My uncle, who was my father too by adoption, was an historian, of most religious exactness. And all wise men agree, that it is best to tread in the footsteps of our ancestors, if they have gone before us in a right path. Why therefore am I staggered? Because I have heretofore pleaded many great, and consider-

^p DRYDEN *Georgic*. 3. l. 8. and 9.

^a The verse in VIRGIL, here alluded to, is in the 5th *Æneid*. l. 195. *Quaquam O!*

able causes. I intend to peruse these again, (although indeed I do not build much upon them) lest by not giving them the last polish, what has heretofore cost me so much pains, may perish with me. For, if you have a view to posterity, whatever is not absolutely finished, may be looked upon as not begun. You will tell me, I may review my pleadings, and compose my history at the same time. I wish I could! but each is so mighty an undertaking, that it will be abundantly sufficient to bring either to perfection. I was nineteen years old when I first began to plead; and now, at last, I begin to see, and even yet only, as it were, through a cloud of darkness, in what manner an orator ought to excel. Shall then a fresh burden be added to this undertaking? It is true, an oration and an history have many things in common; but there is still great variety in those things, which seem common to each. The first is full of narration, so is the second; but in a different manner. The humblest, the meanest, and the most trite subjects are adapted to the one; whilst, in the other, all that is extraordinary, splendid, or exalted, ought to shine. In the one, may be described the bones, the muscles, and the nerves; in the other, the brawny, and more fleshy parts of the body. The one, must prevail by violence, by bitterness, by earnestness: the other, by dignity and gentleness; nay, and even by sweetness. Lastly, the words, the sounds, the constructions of each are different. For it is of great consequence, as THUCYDIDES observes, whether you have your reward in present; or whether you are still striving for it: the first is applicable to orations; the second to history. For these reasons, I am not induced to confound and jumble together two dissimilar works, which, in their nature, are so contrary to each other; lest bewildered, as it were, in so incongruous a performance, I should do in one place, what I ought to do in another. In the mean while, therefore, to use
the

the phrase of the bar, I asked permission to plead. But, at present, let me desire you to consider the history of what particular times I shall undertake. If of old times, and such as are already upon record, the materials are at hand; but it is a heavy task to collate them: if of later times, and such as have never been touched upon, the offence I must give will be great, the thanks I shall receive will be small. And besides, as in such a general depravity of manners among mankind, there must be a greater foundation for censure, than for praise; so it will be said, that I am too sparing of commendation, and too lavish for reproach, although I give ample room to the former, and strictly confine myself to the latter. But these apprehensions do not retard me: I have sufficient courage in the cause of truth. What I beg of you, is, to make the way ready, in which you would have me go; and to chuse out a proper road, lest, when I am prepared to set forth, some new and just reason for delay may arise and stop me. Farewell.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

Suades ut historiam scribam, et suades non solus: multi hoc me sæpe monuerunt: "You advise me to write a history, and you are not singular in your advice: many of my friends have put me upon the same undertaking." It is no wonder to find, that the friends of PLINY were importunate, that he should undertake the most difficult, as well as the most useful task in the world. The candour of his mind, the extent of his knowledge, and the acquisitions of his experience, rendered him highly accomplished for an historian: but I doubt we must ever despair of seeing a perfect history. If an historian treats of his own æra, he cannot avoid being partial: if he treats of antiquity, he must rely upon such of his predecessors, as were, like himself, partial to the age, in which they lived. It is impossible to be utterly divested of prejudice: nor can we free ourselves from the weight of education, consanguinity, friendship, and all those other numerous obligations, which will imperceptibly slide into the scale, and bear down the just equilibrium,

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that should always be preserved in history. The indulgence therefore, which HORACE has given to poets, may reasonably be allowed to historians. *Non ego paucis offendar maculis.* When truth is the ultimate end of the history itself, and integrity and uprightness the guides of the historian, the inevitable infirmities of human nature are easily to be overlooked, or forgiven.

Mihi pulchrum in primis videtur, non pati occidere, quibus æternitas debeat, aliorumque famam cum suâ extendere: "I am," says PLINY, "chiefly induced to a performance of this sort, by considering, that an author, who conveys to posterity the actions of eminent men, at the same time, that he establishes their character, immortalizes his own. The pictures will be admired, and the painter held in great veneration; especially, as they represent persons, whose names are sacred, and dear to mankind, and whose virtues ought to be engraven on eternal monuments."

Orationi et carmini est parva gratia, nisi eloquentia sit summa: historia quoque modo scripta deleat. "Poetry and oratory must be perfect in their kind; they must be polished to the nicest degree: no flaws, no errors will be admitted there: the diction must be pure, the language easy, the thoughts natural; energy and harmony must flow throughout the whole. But history needs no peculiar grace to adorn it; the subject matter is so entertaining, that if the style be not minutely observed, yet it will give delight at any rate." *Sunt enim homines naturâ curiosi, et quâlibet nudâ rerum cognitione capiuntur, ut qui sermunculis etiam fabellisque ducantur:* "For people, in general, are naturally so insatiable, and thirsty after all historical facts, that they greedily swallow down every little tale, or anecdote; every scrap of history, that is set before them." This seems to be the full meaning of these two last quotations; and there is great truth in PLINY'S remark. The worst and most infamous histories have their readers and admirers; they hit the vicious taste of a multitude; always more attentive to lies ill told, than to truth, be it sung ever so sweetly; or, to speak plainer, more desirous of scandal from a bad pen, than of panegyric from a good one.

It is from this letter we learn, that PLINY was nineteen years old when he first appeared at the bar. *Undevicesima*

* HORAT. Art. Poet. lin. 351.

etatis uno die in foro capti. And the epistle, from the turn of it, and from the hints which PLINY gives of his experience, leaves room to surmise it written in TRAJAN'S reign. Our author had then seen the vicissitudes of many dangerous times, and had passed through an exceeding hot and fiery furnace, unscathed, and unchanged. But the history here intended was not, in all likelihood, undertaken by him; at least, no footsteps of it have remained to posterity.

EPISTLE IX.

PLINY to POMPEIUS SATURNINUS.

YOUR letters have stirred up in me various passions; for they contained partly joyful, and partly sorrowful news. It was joyful to hear you was detained in town; much against your own inclinations, you say; but not in the least against mine; especially, as you promise to rehearse your works as soon as I arrive. I thank you for waiting my arrival.

It is melancholy to hear, that JULIUS VALENS is so extremely ill; yet not melancholy, if we regard only his benefit; since it certainly is best for him to be delivered, as soon as possible, from an incurable disease.

That JULIUS AVITUS is dead, upon his return from his questorship, is not only a sorrowful, but an affecting piece of news. Dead too on ship-board, at a distance from his most affectionate brother, his mother, and his sisters. These incidents are not of consequence to the dead; but they were of consequence to him, when dying, and are to those who survive him; especially, because a young man of so great hopes, thus fallen in the flower of his age, might have attained to the highest character, had his virtues reached their maturity. What a love of letters inflamed him! What an infinite deal too has he written! all which, like himself, must perish, without bringing

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forth fruit to posterity. But wherefore do I indulge my grief? which, when unbridled, never wants sufficient matter to go on. I will put a stop to my letter, that I may likewise stop those tears, which the letter has extracted from me,

OBSERVATIONS.

The reflexion made by PLINY, upon the irrecoverable illness of JULIUS VALENS is extremely humane. *Quantum ne hoc quidem triste, si illius utilitatibus aestimetur, casus interest quam maturissime inexplicabili morbo liberari.* It is certain, that death is preferable to a life of pain; but, as the poet † says,

Distrust and darkness of a future state
Make poor mankind so anxious of their fate;
Death in itself is nothing, but we fear
To be, we know not what, we know not where.

The belief of the antients, concerning departed souls, is not thoroughly explained to us. The sixth Æneid, particularly that part of it, in which the infernal regions are described, is thought to contain as full a system of their creed, as any that can be found in other authors. The doctrine laid down by VIRGIL seems to be, that, in the regions of PLUTO, there were two separate and distinct places; one called *Tartarus*, allotted for the wicked, who receive punishments proportionable to their crimes; the other, called *Elysium*, where the happy spirits are represented, as entertaining themselves in beautiful fields, with the same diversions and amusements, in which they took delight when alive. This is the poetical heaven and hell. But because the most perfect souls had contracted great impurity by being joined to the body, they were obliged, before their entrance into *Elysium*, to undergo some purgation and punishment, till the pollution was taken away.

*Aliis sub gurgite vasto
Insectum pluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni †.*

† DRYDEN.

† Æn. 6. v. 471.

The

The last sentence is particularly remarkable, as it bears so near a resemblance to the modern purgatory, that were the same words found in a Christian poet, they could not be construed to any other signification.

We have great reason to conclude, that the most rational heathens held eternity of torments [¶]. THESEUS is particularly named by VIRGIL; nor is there any instance where souls, once condemned to punishments in *Tartarus*, were released from perpetual damnation. SISYPHUS, at least we hear nothing to the contrary, was always to roll his stone. TANTALUS was eternally to be amidst apples and water. Nor can we find, that any purgation was sufficient to cleanse those, whose crimes were so enormous, as to draw upon them the irrevocable decree of *Tartarean* torments.

And now, my CHARLES, since I have wandered so far from PLINY, let me still go on a little farther; a liberty that I have already taken, and must still pursue, in expressing my observations upon these epistles.

However durable, according to the heathen system, the sufferings of *Tartarus* were decreed to be, the pleasures of *Elysium* lasted only a thousand years. The happy souls, after that termination, were obliged to drink a draught of *Lethe*, by which potion they lost all remembrance of joys in the *Elysian* fields, and of preceding sorrows and uneasiness, which they had endured upon earth. In that state of oblivion they informed new bodies. Thus, when ÆNEAS enquires into the cause of so great a concurrence at *Lethe*, he is answered by ANCHISES,

Rursus et incipiant in corpora velle reverti [¶].

They were souls, who having been a thousand years in *Elysium*, the only condition requisite for their return, were now hastening again to the upper regions of earth. This poetical notion is not disagreeable to fancy, although not consonant to religion. It bears some analogy to the doctrine of the *Millennium*, which was an opinion held by the primi-

[¶] Vide HOMER. II. ©. 8. v. 13. NATALIS COMES says, that they thought the wicked are to be for ever in hell. The same author speaking of *Tartarus*, describes it, *Qui locus est pœnarum, luce omnino cœrens, neque inde exire in perpetuum licitum est.*

[¶] See the answer of ANCHISES from v. 724. to v. 751. Æn. 6.

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tive Christians, however disregarded in these later times. Upon the whole, the consideration of PLINY, that his friend's death would be a release from misery, is extremely consonant to good nature, and the religion of the *Romans*; who believed no man eternally damned, if he had not been guilty of some monstrous crime; and whose purgatory, if not of a shorter duration than that of modern *Rome*, was at least unattended with the same expence.

EPISTLE X.

PLINY to M. ARRIUS ANTONINUS.

WHEN I endeavour to imitate your verses, it is then I find their excellency: for, as painters are seldom able to represent every beauty in a fair and captivating face; even so, in these my attempts; I climb, but fall down from the original. For this reason, let me intreat you more earnestly to publish as many as possible of your works, as patterns, which all will desire, but few or none will be able to imitate. Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

In the third epistle of the fourth book we may remember, that ANTONINUS had composed certain *Greek* epigrams and iambic verses, which received from PLINY the highest degree of admiration and applause. The eighteenth epistle of that book is addressed again to ANTONINUS, upon the same subject, and in the same boundless strain of approbation. The epistle now before us differs, neither in style nor matter, from the latter of the two epistles already mentioned. All the three letters tend to establish the character of ANTONINUS, as a master in the *Greek* language, an excellent epigrammatist, and a fine composer of iambic verse. Monsieur DACIER observes, that *Greece*, in the space of fifty five Olympiads, two hundred and twenty years, produced nine *lyric*, and three *iambic* poets. The distinguished names, in the first kind, were ALCMAN, STESICHORUS, SAPPHO, ALCEUS, SIMONIDES, IBYCUS, ANACREON, PINDAR, BACCHYLIDES;

CHYLIDES; in the second kind were ARCHILOCHUS, SIMONIDES, and HIPPOXACHUS.

Lyrics and iambics are different in these respects. Iambics are confined to a certain measure, and are always satirical. Lyrics are a species of poetry, far more antient than iambics. They were practised at festivals, in the earliest ages of the world; ages, when all degrees of men were employed in tillage, and in various sorts of industry and exercise. Kings and patriarchs were only superior herdsmen. When their labours were finished, or rewarded by the fertility of their soil, they chose to express their gratitude to heaven in sudden raptures of lyric poetry. Harmony of numbers naturally arises from minds filled with pleasure, and joyful in repose. Nature first gave rise to the song, and art and observation afterwards corrected, and made it uniform: but iambics appeared not till the vices and irregularities of mankind grew more triumphant and outrageous.

E P I S T L E X I.

PLINY to S U E T O N I U S T R A N Q U I L L U S.

FULFIL the engagement made by me in my verses, wherein I promised your writings to our common friends. They are daily called for; they are impatiently expected: and the danger now is, that their publication should be forced upon you by a process of law.

I am myself an arrant loiterer in publishing, but you even outdo me in procrastination and delay. At once therefore, either break through your dilatory disposition, or take care, that those pieces, which my more soothing poetry could not draw from you, my iambics, by dint of satire, may extort. Your work is perfect, and finished; not to be polished, but rather impaired by the file. Permit me to see your name before it; permit me to hear, to copy, to read, to buy the volumes of my TRANQUILLUS. It is but just, that, in so mutual a friendship as ours, I should receive from you the same satisfaction, and delight, which you have enjoyed from me. Adieu. O B.

OBSERVATIONS.

It appears, by this letter, that PLINY had mentioned, in certain verses of his own composition, some performance, which the public were shortly to expect from SUTTONIUS TRANQUILLUS. *Libera tandem benedecasyllaborum meorum fidem, qui scripta tua communibus amicis spondiderunt*: “I have been your bondsman to our common friends: shew yourself a man of honour, and pay your debt.”

Jam periculum est, ne cogantur ad exhibendum formulam accipere. It is difficult to render the last phrase, *formulam accipere*, into such exact *English*, as shall fully answer the meaning. It alludes to a form in the *Roman law*. The sense seems to be, “You are in danger of having a bill filed against you, to oblige you to a publication.” The epistle is written jocosely from PLINY to SUTTONIUS, and this particular phrase shews the familiarity between them; and, at the same time, conveys a genteel compliment from our author to his friend.

Perfectum opus, absolutumque est, nec jam splendescit limas, sed atteritur: It is a perfect work, and finished in every particular: the file may wear it, but can never give it an “additional lustre.” We are not informed, by any expression in this letter, what work of SUTTONIUS is here particularly meant, and thus exorbitantly extolled by PLINY. If it be the history of the twelve Cæsars, as probably it is, no performance remains, even to this day, in greater want of the file. For although it must be allowed, that many curious anecdotes are related by that biographer, not to be found in any other author, yet his total want of decency is shocking and inexcusable. The imperial vices are too particularly and too indelicately exposed to view; an error, which renders his whole work absolutely void of neatness, elegance, and dignity. There are certain impurities, which ought never to be recorded; they cannot be thought of without horror; nor can they be mentioned without shame. If possible, therefore, they should be buried in oblivion, and never sully the page, nor defile the character of an historian; the observation being no less true, than general, that the writings of an author are of the same level with his conversation.

E P I S T L E XII.

PLINY to FABATUS, his wife's grandfather.

I Have received your letters, by which I am informed, that you have dedicated an elegant portico to the public in your own name, and the name of your son^{*}; and, that the day following, you promised to give money to adorn the gates, as if a new act of liberality was, with you, the necessary consequence of having finished a former. This gives me joy, first, upon account of your glory, some part of which, in consequence of our alliance, will necessarily redound upon me; next, that I see the fame of my father-in-law thus enlarged, by works of such distinguished beauty; lastly, that our country is in such a flourishing condition. I shall be pleased, let her ornaments come from any hand; but shall be most delighted, when they come from you. I shall now only add a prayer to the gods, that you may enjoy this beneficent temper of mind to an extreme old age. For I dare to prophesy, that, when you have executed this engagement, you will then undertake some other public work; because liberality, when once it has been exerted, cannot remain inactive. The very practice of this virtue makes it still more amiable. Adieu.

O B S E R V A T I O N S.

In this epistle, the answer to a letter from FABATUS, we may observe the distinction between the *porticus*, and the *porta*; neither of which belonged to each other. The Porticos were built separately in several parts of *Rome*; they were places for walking, and for public business. Our mer-

* The son of FABATUS was the father of CALPURNIA, the wife of PLINY. He died young, and, after his death, his daughter was educated by his sister, her aunt, HISPULLA.

cantile exchanges are very much of the same kind; they were frequented by different sets of people: in one part of the city the philosophers had their hours of meeting; in another the merchants assembled; in others the poets, the statesmen, and the politicians. These public edifices were always open, and many of them belonged to the theatres, the temples, and the houses of the chief nobility. By their form and situation, they were a defence against the inconveniences of weather. The *porticus Pompeiana* is particularly mentioned by OVID, PROPERTIUS, and MARTIAL. And we find by this epistle, that FABATUS had imitated other great men, by giving to the public a noble portico for their assemblies.

The *porta*, or gates of the cities of Italy, were very numerous, and from the great concourse of people, and the injury of carriages, were liable to decay. We may suppose therefore, that at the time, when this letter was written to FABATUS, some gates were to be rebuilt, and the money to be raised, by a general tax upon the people, or by a sum given out of the public treasury. FABATUS, at his own expence, undertook to adorn these buildings, and is here complimented by PLINY upon the occasion. The reflexion and the end is perfectly elegant; "Liberality, says PLINY, "is heightened in her charms, by the repeated exercise of "her donations." Our author never omits an occasion, to set forth generosity in her most attracting colours, and to make her beauties universally confessed and admired.

EPISTLE XIII.

PLINY to SCAURUS.

WHEN I intended to rehearse a small oration, which I have thoughts of publishing, I called together some of my friends, that I might be in awe: I summoned few, that I might hear truth. I had two reasons for the rehearsal; one was, that I might be encouraged by their sollicitude for me; the other, that I might be admonished by them, if any errors from self-indulgence had escaped me. I enjoyed what I desired: I found such friends, as very freely gave me their advice: and I myself noted several

veral passages capable of emendation. I have corrected the book, which I have sent you. The subject will be made known to you by the title. The book itself will explain the rest; which I would make so constant a rule, that from henceforward no preface need be wanting. I desire that you will write to me your opinion, both of the whole, and of the particular parts; for I shall either be more wary in suppressing, or more resolved in publishing it, as your opinion shall determine me. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

There are very many epistles of PLINY upon this subject of rehearsals. But the custom itself is so unknown, and of so little consequence to us, that however judicious and excellent these letters may have been, when they were written, they can make little impression upon *English* readers at this distance of time. SÆTONIUS tells us, that AUGUSTUS CÆSAR, in diffidence of his memory, accustomed himself constantly to read his speeches, lest he might omit any particulars; and also, that he might not lose time in getting them by heart. *Ac ne periculum memoria adiret, aut in ediscenda tempus absumeret, instituit recitare omnia*. Therefore *oratiuncula quam recitaturus* signifies the speech read by PLINY from his notes, and not rehearsed without book; although sometimes it bears, I think, the latter signification.

This epistle is addressed to SCAURUS, who is mentioned in a very extraordinary manner, by PLINY, in the twenty fifth epistle of the sixth book.

Tu velim, quid de universo, quid de partibus, sentias, scribas mihi: "I should be glad to know your opinion of the whole, and of every part of it." This shews the high opinion entertained by PLINY of his friend's judgement. And we must often have remarked the particular care and caution taken by him, that his works should come out to the public in a finished, perfect manner: he constantly delivers them up to the censure and perusal of his friends; he invites their criticisms, and is solicitous for their corrections; a method which one of our dramatic writers pursued, by

SÆTON. AUGUSTUS, cap. 84.

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sending six manuscript copies of a new tragedy to half a dozen different friends, desiring each to blot out such parts, as he should find faulty, or improper; and not acquainting any one of the six, that he had sent a copy to another. But alas! when the books were returned, and the poet had spread and compared them upon his table, he observed, to his great astonishment, that the lines, which one critic had not blotted out, had been erased by another, so that, unhappily, not a single syllable remained of the whole dramatical labour.

EPISTLE XIV.

PLINY to VALERIANUS.

I Comply with your request, according to my promise, in informing you what was the event of the accusation brought by NEPOS against TUSCILLUS NOMINATUS.

NOMINATUS was brought into the senate, where he pleaded for himself, no body appearing against him. For the legates of the Vicentini not only forbore pressing hard upon him, but even gave him some assistance. The substance of his defence was, "That
 " in discharge of his duty of advocate, he had not
 " been defective in point of fidelity, but of resolution:
 " tion: that he had come in order to plead, and was
 " even seen in the court; but afterwards, discouraged
 " ed by the discourse of his friends, he retired. For
 " he was advised to take care how he did so obsti-
 " nately oppose, especially in the senate, the desire
 " of a senator, who now contended, not so much for
 " obtaining the settlement of a fair on his estate, as
 " for favour, reputation, and honour: otherwise he
 " must expect to meet with greater marks of dislike;
 " than what had been already shewn him." (When he
 spoke before, some few shouts indeed had been raised
 against him, as he went out.) He added to his supplications a torrent of tears. And as he is a man of
 great

great eloquence and abilities, he turned his discourse in such a manner, that, through the whole of it, he seemed rather to ask pardon, than insist upon his defence; which is certainly the safest and most prudent method. AFRANIUS DEXTER, the consul elect, was of opinion he should be acquitted; he said, "That NOMINATUS would have done better indeed, if he had gone through the cause of the Vicentini with the same courage he undertook it: but since his fault could not be construed a fraud, nor was he convicted of having committed any crime, which demanded punishment, he might be pardoned, upon condition that he restored to the Vicentini what ever he had received from them." All were of the same sentiments, except FLAVIUS APER. He was of opinion, that NOMINATUS should be forbidden to act as an advocate during the space of five years: and although his authority drew no body over to his side, yet he still persisted in that opinion. Nay, he went so far, by taking advantage of the law concerning the meeting of the senate, as to oblige DEXTER to swear, that the motion he had made for the acquitting of NOMINATUS, was purely for the good of the commonwealth. This demand, though a legal, was opposed by several. It seemed to reproach DEXTER with giving his sentence out of favour to the accused. But before the several opinions were delivered, NIGRINUS, tribune of the people, repeated a very learned and weighty remonstrance, in which he complained, that the advocates were hired; that even *prævarications** were sold; that the lawyers joined together in creating suits; and that, instead of glory, their former motive of acting, they had large and fixed salaries out of the spoils of the citizens. He repeated the heads of several laws, and put them in

* *Prævaricationes* is a law term, signifying *collusion in pleading*: Money taken on both sides, for which the advocates privately betray the cause they pretend to defend.

P L I N Y ' s E P I S T L E S :

mind of the decrees of the senate; and at last concluded, that since both the laws and decrees of the senate were disregarded, they ought to petition the emperor, that he would take upon himself to remedy so great evils. In some few days after an edict was published by the emperor, which was at once both moderate and severe. You may find it in the public register.

What a real joy does it give me, that in pleading causes, I not only kept myself free from any bargain, gift, or present, but even from any token of acknowledgment, that might pass from one friend to another? We ought indeed to avoid those things that are dishonest, not as they are unlawful, but as they are shameful. However, it is a most sensible satisfaction to see those customs publicly forbidden, which a man has never allowed himself to practise. Fewer praises, and a less degree of fame, perhaps, nay, I may add, most certainly, will accrue to me, when all are absolutely obliged to go in the same track, in which I trod voluntarily. In the mean while I enjoy great pleasure, by hearing some of my friends declare, that I must have foreseen this event; and others, in the same strain of jest and raillery, say, there is now an entire stop to my plunder and my avarice. Adieu.

O B S E R V A T I O N S .

The fourth epistle of this book contains the beginning of the cause between SOLERS and the Vicentinians. The epistle now before us is a continuation of the same subject.

SOLERS was a senator; he had been prætor; and was still in high power and authority. He had petitioned the senate for a permission of holding fairs upon his estate. His petition had been opposed by the Vicentinians. The legates of the Vicentinians had employed TUSCILLUS NOMINATUS as their advocate, and had given him a large fee. NOMINATUS spoke for his clients the first day. But the
senate

senate coming to no determination, the cause was put off to another day; and NOMINATUS received a second fee from the Vicentiniāns. His friends, however, dissuaded him from appearing a second time, by suggesting the infinite dangers; which he must incur, if he appeared as an adversary against SOLERS. He easily yielded to their persuasions, and keeping the fee, which he had received from the Vicentiniāns, left them to defend their own cause.

A day was now appointed for the appearance of TUSCILLUS NOMINATUS, against whose breach of trust the Vicentiniāns had most justly complained. He came before the senate with all the moving eloquence of sorrow, fear and repentance: he submitted, he prayed, he wept; his artifice prevailed. The senate accepted of his submission; the Vicentiniāns followed their example; and NOMINATUS received the mildest sentence, that could possibly be decreed; *Ut Vicentinis, quod acceperat, redderet*: "That he should restore to the Vicentiniāns the fees, which he had received from them."

In this epistle the avarice and timidity of NOMINATUS, and the corruption and partiality of the Roman senate, plainly appear. The advocate deserts his clients, and quits his duty, from the fear of offending a powerful senator. He is then summoned, in all the pomp of justice, to answer to the accusation of so great a breach of trust. He comes, he acts the part, which, without doubt, he was privately ordered to assume. And the consul elect is suddenly, but evidently, convinced of his innocence. The venerable fathers immediately follow the example of their future consul; the Vicentiniāns are repaid, and TUSCILLUS NOMINATUS is acquitted.

FLAVIUS APER, in whom some sparks of true virtue still subsisted, was the only senator, who gave his negative to this decree. He openly opposed the sentence: he went on still farther, and moved, that NOMINATUS should be suspended from exercising his employment, as a lawyer, during five years. If this motion had taken place, it must have overturned the scheme concerted, and agreed upon, (at what price will never be known,) between NOMINATUS and AFRANIUS DEXTER, consul elect. The senators saw the justice of the proposition, advanced by APER; *sed dicere mussant*, "they were all silent," and the motion, of consequence, was dropped. APER still continued firm and re-

solute in the cause of justice ; and trying, as far as possible, to discover the iniquity, he insisted, that **AFRANIUS DEXTER** should take an oath, whereby he should declare, "That he had given his opinion without bias, or favour, and, as far as his judgement and conscience could direct him, tally in regard to the benefit and prosperity of the common-wealth." This proposal also, of putting **DEXTER** to his oath, met with opposition ; although it was entirely consistent with the laws then in force, which allowed any person, who was qualified to vote, to demand such an oath, and gave him a power to compel the party to take that oath : but when once the bounds of integrity are removed, morality and truth are no longer prevalent ; and oaths become the *vex, et praterca nihil*.

NIGRINUS recitavit libellum disertum et gravem, &c. The full sense and extent of this sentence seems to be, that **NIGRINUS** read a remonstrance, written with great learning and seriousness, which contained many complaints against the advocates in general ; and wherein it was alledged, that they sold their clients, taking money from each party, and betraying both.

The senate, upon the remonstrance of **NIGRINUS**, and, perhaps, from a conscious shame of their late partiality to **NOMINATUS**, addressed the emperor, that he would be pleased, by his own authority, to remedy the enormous corruptions, and many other pernicious evils, which were now predominant among the tribe of *Roman* advocates. Subsequent to this address, an imperial decree was immediately issued, to prohibit the advocates from taking any fee, or reward, for pleading. This decree was ratified by the senate, and enrolled among the public records ; and was, in itself, one of the most glorious acts in **TRAJAN**'s reign.

EPISTLE XV.

PLINY to PONTIUS.

I Was retired to *Comum*, when the news was brought me, that **CORNUTUS TERTULLUS** had accepted the care of the *Æmilian* way. It is impossible to express the joy, with which I am affected, both upon his account

count and my own. Upon his account, because were he, as he certainly is, void of all ambition, the honour, as it came unthought for, must be acceptable to him: Upon my own, because my particular employment must be more agreeable to me, after having seen an office of the same kind bestowed upon CORNUTUS. The elevation of dignity itself is not more desirable, than the equality, upon which it puts us with good men. For who exceeds CORNUTUS? Who is more upright? Or, who lives more strictly after the example of antiquity, in every manner worthy of praise? Report has not informed me of this truth, although he enjoys, as he deserves, the best of characters; I know it from long, and from thorough experience. Our friendships, and affections, have hitherto been the same towards all the worthy persons of either sex, which our age has produced. This agreement in our regard for others has united us in the strictest amity. Our public employments were an additional link to the chain: He was appointed, as you know, in compliance, as it were, with my wishes, not only my colleague in the commission of the treasury, but also in the consulship. At those times I had a deep insight, what, and how great a man he was. I followed him as my director, I revered him as my father: my veneration proceeded not so much from his age as from the integrity of his life. For these reasons, as I congratulate him, I must likewise congratulate myself; and not more upon a private, than upon a public account; since virtue now leads men to honours, not to dangers, as heretofore.

I should extend my letter to too great a length, if I was to indulge my joy. Let me turn to those affairs, in which your messenger found me employed at this place. I was with my wife's grandfather, with her aunt, and with some friends, whom I had long wished to see. I was riding round my estate, and giving audience to the innumerable complaints

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of my tenants. I was reading very cursorily, and against my will, their accounts, (having been engaged in papers and letters of another sort) and, as my absence was limited, I was beginning to make preparations for my journey; especially when I heard, that CORNUTUS had an employment, I was then put in mind of my own. I hope you will quit your *Campania* at the same time; that, upon my return to *Rome*, our conversation may not receive the loss, even of a single day. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The intimacy between PLINY and PONTIUS, to whom this letter is addressed, appears to have been very great. Besides the epistle, which has given rise to these observations, there are two others, the twenty eighth of the sixth book, and the fourth of the seventh book, written in the utmost freedom of friendship to PONTIUS. It is a loss much to be regretted, that PLINY has not given such particular marks of his friends and correspondents, as should point out their persons and employments. They were certainly eminent in station, abilities, and virtue. Such of them, as are known to us, appear to have been men of learning, or men of business, poets, or patriots, historians, or proconsuls; and, were we acquainted with all the rest, the whole group might form in some measure the court of TRAJAN; an assembly, I imagine, little inferior to the court of AUGUSTUS. We scarce meet with the name of PONTIUS, except in TACITUS and ^a SÜETONIUS ^b, who tell us, that in the last year of TIBERIUS, CN. ACERRONIUS and C. PONTIUS were appointed consuls.

We can gather no other particulars of TERTULLUS, than what are given to us by PLINY himself ^c. TRAJAN, in the first year of his reign, appointed PLINY *Præfect of the treasury of SATURN*. TERTULLUS was a joint commissioner with him in that office. In the third year of TRA-

^a Vide TACIT. Annal. lib. vi. cap. XLV.

^b SÜETON. TIBERIUS NERO; cap. LXXIII.

^c PLINY speaks of TERTULLUS in his panegyric. sect. XC. and says, *Idem amicis gloriabamur, eosdem amissos lugebamus.*

JAN, on the calends of September, PLINY and CORNUTUS TERTULEUS were appointed consuls; but the consulship was of short duration. They were succeeded in that dignity, on the calends of the following November, by JULIUS FERROX, and ACUTIUS NERVA. In the fourth year of TRAJAN, PLINY took a journey into *Tuscany*, and, in the same year, visited *Comum*. During his retirement at that place, it is probable he received the welcome news, with which he begins his epistle, CORNELIUM TERTULLUM accepisse *Æmiliæ viæ curam*. To this particular period we may also venture to affix the date of this letter.

The *via Æmilia* was one of the most famous roads in *Italy*; it led from *Rimini* to *Aquileia*. It was made at the expence, and by the care of the consul PAULUS ÆMILIUS, whose life is written by PLUTARCH. The SEMPRONII, the MARCELLI, the FULVII, the ÆMILII^d, not to mention more, were the most illustrious families in *Rome*.

The office of supervising the high-ways was originally instituted by AUGUSTUS, who, according to SÆTONIUS^e; invented new employments, that a great number of persons might partake in the administration of the commonwealth. The employment itself was extremely honourable, and always given to men of the highest distinction, as may be seen by the inscriptive stones dedicated to the *viarum curatores*, who were also called *viocuri*. The care taken by the *Romans*, in forming and preserving their public roads, cannot be too much applauded, or too exactly imitated. They were, in this instance, as in many others, the wisest and most laborious people in the world.

^d Vide JUVENAL. Sat. 8.

^e Quoque plures partem administrandæ reip. caperent, nova officia exegitavit, curam operum publicorum, viarum, &c. SÆT. AUG. cap. XXXVII.

EPISTLE XVI.

PLINY to MARCELLINUS.

I Write this to you under the greatest oppression of grief. The youngest daughter of our friend FUNDANUS is dead. I have never seen a more lovely, or

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a more chearful young woman. She not only deserved a longer life, but scarce ought to have been subject to mortality. She had not compleatly reached her fourteenth year; yet she possessed the prudence of age, and the gravity of the matron; with it the gentleness of the child, and the bashfulness of the virgin. How have I seen her clinging round her father's neck! How modestly, and how lovingly has she embraced us, as her father's friends! How were her nurses, tutors, and preceptors each, according to their several employments, respected by her! How studiously, and with what a quickness of understanding did she read! How sparingly, and how cautiously did she enter into diversions! how great was her temperance; how great her patience; and with how much fortitude did she bear her last illness! She obeyed her physician; she encouraged her father, and her sister; and when the strength of her body failed, the vigour of her mind sustained her. This firmness remained to the last moment; nor was it interrupted by the continuance of her illness, or the apprehensions of her dissolution. All, so many more, and so many heavier aggravations of our agony, and affliction. O melancholy, O bitter obsequies! O unhappy instant of death, more unhappy than death itself! She was, just now, contracted to an accomplished young man: the nuptial day was fixed, and we, her friends, were summoned. What a scene of joy! into how great affliction is that joy changed!

I cannot express, in words, the wound which I felt in the recess of my mind, when I heard FUNDANUS himself giving orders, (as grief is ever inventive of farther misery) that the money he had destined to lay out in the wedding-clothes, pearls and jewels, should now be applied to buy oils, perfumes, and incense for the funeral. He is, indeed, a learned, and a wise man, who, from his earliest time of
 life,

life, has applied himself to the deeper studies, and more refined sciences. But, at present, all that he has ever heard, all that he has often said, all other virtues, but paternal love, are totally expelled from his heart. You will pardon, you will even praise him, when you reflect upon his loss. For he has lost a daughter, who did not less resemble him in his manners, than in his looks and countenance; and who, with an amazing likeness, had copied her whole father.

If you write to him, therefore, upon this just occasion of sorrow, let your consolation be applied gently, and compassionately; not in a manner too rough, or too strong. Your advice will more easily make its way, by the intermediate space of time, that must occur: for as a fresh wound, at first, dreads the hand of the artist, which it afterwards endures; so recent grief, at first, rejects, and flies from all comfort, but afterwards demands, and submits to, impressions exhibited with mildness. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

Nature is revulsed, when a child is buried by a parent. The character of FUNDANUS himself is highly finished by the pencil of friendship, and of skill. But the portrait of his daughter is in more captivating colours. Her sex, her age, and her virtues, are all so many incitements to our sorrow; or, in the words of PLINY, *plures gravioreque cause et desiderii et doloris*. There is scarce any word, in our language, that fully answers the idea conveyed to us by *desiderium*, when used in this particular sense. It signifies the impatient longing after an object, that can never be recalled: An object,

Par levis ventis, valucrique simillima somno †.

“ Like the light winds, whose flight no pray’rs can stay,
“ Or shadowy forms, that fleet in dreams away.”

† VIRGIL. *Æneid.* vi. †. 702.

Every

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Every language may be said to monopolize some certain words, which cannot be fully expressed in any other tongue. Thus, *good-nature* is so peculiarly *English*, that it cannot be equalled by the dialect in any other nation. But indeed, this whole epistle has inexpressible beauties. The style, though raised to a very high degree, is not exalted beyond the sublimity of the subject, and the conclusion is most delicate and affecting.

The epistle is addressed to MARCELLINUS, whom I imagine to be the same person, spoken of by PLINY in the twelfth epistle of the fourth book. He is called EGNATIUS MARCELLINUS; *Amas* EGNATIUM MARCELLINUM, says PLINY, in the beginning of that letter. In the eighth book we shall find an epistle to MARCELLINUS upon the death of JUNIUS AVITUS: so that the only letters extant, from PLINY to him, are upon the most sorrowful topics, and written in so pathetic a manner, as to distinguish them among the choicest compositions of that kind.

EPISTLE XVII.

PLINY to SPURINNA.

I Know how much you honour the liberal arts ; what joy you take, when the actions of young noblemen are worthy of their ancestors : let me therefore hasten to tell you, that yesterday I was one of the audience of CALPURNIUS PISO. He repeated a poem called *the play of love* ; a polite, and indeed a beautiful performance. It was written in flowing elegiac verse ; and, as the subject required, was tender, smooth, and yet sublime. For, with a proper diversity of style, he mixed the noble with the simple, the familiar with the lofty, and the gay with the serious ; all with an equal strength of genius. He recommended the whole by the excessive sweetness of his voice, and his voice by his modesty. The blushes, and the anxiety of his countenance, were an ornament to his rehearsal. For I know not by what means, yet certainly diffidence becomes men of learning,

ing, better than sufficiency. But enough of this, although I might proceed much farther; because such performances are the more commendable in a young man, and still more extraordinary in a nobleman. When the rehearsal was finished, after having very heartily embraced the young man, and encouraging him by the praises I bestowed on him, which are always the best arguments, I advised him *to go on, as he had begun; and he would himself hold out to his posterity that light, which had been held out to him by his ancestors.*

I made my compliments to his excellent mother on this occasion, and I congratulated his brother, who, by being one of his audience, gained no less glory by the affection he expressed, than CALPURNIUS did by his eloquence; so evidently did his first fears, for his brother's rehearsal, change into joy.

May the Gods grant that I often tell you such pieces of news; for this age has my earnest wishes, that it may not be barren, and unproductive; and I sincerely desire, that our nobility should have some other beautiful ornaments in their houses, besides mere statues. Those, which are in the houses of these young men, to me seem tacitly to praise, exhort, and, what is a great glory to the two brothers, to acknowledge them. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

There are only two epistles from PLINY to SPURINNA; the first is, the tenth epistle of the third book; to which, if order had been consulted, this epistle should immediately have succeeded: for, although there probably might have been a great distance of time between the first and the last; yet letters to the same person ought not to be separated, without some manifest reason to the contrary.

Nuncio tibi, fuisse me hodie in auditorio CALPURNII PISONIS: "I must inform you, that I was present to day, "when CALPURNIUS PISO rehearsed." No name, among the Romans, is greater, or more distinguished, and scarce any

any so numerous, as that of PISO ^s. The two brothers, mentioned in this epistle, I imagine, were grandsons of L. CALPURNIUS PISO, who was consul in the fourteenth year of TIBERIUS ^h; a year, which became remarkable by a most fatal accident at *Fidenæ*, where, in the sudden fall of an amphi theatre newly built, fifteen thousand persons were maimed, or killed. L. CALPURNIUS PISO was again consul in the fourth year of NERO ⁱ, and colleague to the emperor himself. But the outrages of NERO growing intolerable, PISO unhappily entered into a conspiracy against him, of which TACITUS ^k gives us a full account: part of it is well worth remembering in the words of that historian, as we there see the character of PISO himself. *Ineunt deinde consulatum SILIUS NERVA, et ATTICUS VESTINUS ^l, coepta simul et augeta conjuratione, in quam certatim nomina dederebant senatores, eques, miles, fœminæ etiam, cum odio NERONIS, tum favore in C. PISONEM. Is CALPURNIO genere ortus, ac multas insignesque familias paternâ nobilitate completus, claro apud vulgum rumore erat, per virtutem aut species virtutibus similes. Namque facundiam tuendis civibus exercebat, largitionem adversus amicos, et ignotis quoque comi sermone et congressu. Aderant etiam fortuita, corpus procerum, decora facies. Sed procal gravitas morum, aut voluptatum parsimonia: lenitati, ac magnificentia, et aliquando luxui indulgebat:*

“ At the same time that SILIUS NERVA and ATTICUS VESTINUS began their consulship, a conspiracy was commenced and carried on, which had been entered into with eagerness, not only by senators, knights, and soldiers, but even by women; all of them entertaining no less hatred to NERO, than affection to CALP. PISO, who was of the Calpurnian family, and who, by his father's side, was allied to many of the most illustrious houses among the nobility. He had rendered himself extremely popular, either by virtue, or by the appearance of it. His eloquence had always been employed in defence of the people: He was liberal to his friends; and to strangers perfectly complaisant, and respectful. He had some lucky advantages in his favour: he was tall, and handsome. But his morals were far from being of the gravest kind;

^s See TACITUS, who mentions many of the name.

^h Year of Rome 779. ⁱ Of Rome 809.

^k TACIT. Annal. lib. xv. cap. XLVIII.

^l U. C. 817. NERO 12.

“ nor was he in the least parsimonious of his pleasures. He allowed himself great indulgence in ease and ostentation, and sometimes in luxury.” When the conspiracy was discovered, all the chief conspirators were put to death. Among whom were, PLAUTIUS LATERANUS consul elect; LUCAN the poet; and his uncle SENECA; who had, since the death of BURRHUS¹, looked upon himself to be in the utmost danger. LUCAN is said to have acted a very mean part upon this occasion; and his flatteries to the young emperor, even supposing them written in the five first and best years of NERO’s reign, are sufficiently gross, to suspect in him an intolerable baseness, that never can be justified. When this intended attempt for liberty was first disconcerted, PISO was advised, by his friends, to retire to the camp, and to rely upon the affections of the army, and of the people: but he rashly rejected the advice, and, in a kind of ungovernable despair, retired to his own house. A band of soldiers were immediately sent to seize him. Before their arrival, he had ordered the veins of both his arms to be opened, and soon afterwards he expired. When PISO died PLINY was only four years old, which, in point of time, makes the presumption strong, that CALP. PISO, the subject of this epistle, was grandson to the consul.

¹ BURRHUS had instructed NERO in the military sciences, as SENECA had in those of poetry and eloquence. BURRHUS died in the 814th year of Rome, in the ninth of NERO’s reign, who was suspected to have poisoned him.

E P I S T L E XVIII.

PLINY to MACER.

SINCE you are in health and happiness, my condition is certainly the same. You have with you your wife; you have with you your son. You have the advantage of a sea prospect, you enjoy your fountains, your vineyards², your fields, and your most

² *Vitibus* seems a better reading than *viridibus*. There are various readings on this short unimportant epistle, which, in itself, is too defective of the easy manner, or flowing style, that is looked upon as necessary to constitute the elegance and beauty of familiar letters.

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delightful villa. For how can I doubt the delightfulness of your villa, when the same person, before he came to be the happiest man in the empire, was still happier in that place? I hunt and study in *Tuscany*; sometimes alternately; sometimes I take both diversions together. Nor can I yet determine, whether success in sporting, or in writing, be most difficult. Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

The scholiasts tell us, that, in an antient manuscript, this letter is addressed to SPURINNA; whose wife, COCCIA, is mentioned by PLINY, in the first epistle of the third book, as a woman *singularis exempli*, and whose son, COTTIUS, is characterised in the seventh epistle of the second book. But of MACER, and his family, we can learn no particulars, although there are three epistles addressed to him, the fifth of the third book, the epistle now before us, and the twenty fourth epistle of the sixth book, in which last we shall find a very remarkable story.

In quâ se composuerat homo felicior, antequam felicissimus fierit. I am ever sorry to find an affected turn of writing in any of PLINY'S works. This particular sentence, which relates to NERVA, is an example of the strongest affectation. The meaning of it is, that NERVA had enjoyed greater happiness in a private station, at this particular place, than he afterwards enjoyed, when he became emperor, and might be supposed then to be the happiest, because the greatest, man in the kingdom.

NERVA, who was looked upon with a jealous eye by DOMITIAN, is said to have lived in great privacy, and with the utmost caution, at or near *Tarentum*, a noble and antient city of *Calabria*; the most southern part of the kingdom of *Naples*, lying between the *Sicilian* and *Ionian* sea. In those territories therefore we must fix the seat of MACER, who probably loved his ease, *Tarentum* itself being mentioned by HORACE with the epithets *molle et imbelles*, "luxurious" and effeminate."

EPISTLE

E P I S T L E XIX.

P L I N Y to VALERIUS PAULINUS.

I Perceive how humanely you use your servants, which makes me more candidly confess to you; with what indulgence I treat mine. The verse in HOMER is always in my mind,

Ever like a father mild^a;

and that expression of our own, *the father of his family*. But although I were of a more rugged and a harder disposition, the illness of my freed-man ZOSIMUS must melt me. And the more he wants acts of tenderness at this time, the more I think myself obliged to shew them to him. He is a man of probity, of diligence, and of literature. But, indeed, his chief art, and, as it were, his particular recommendation, is his excellence in comedy, in which he performs wonders. For his pronunciation is clear, just, well adapted, and graceful; and he plays upon the harp better, than is expected from a comedian. He reads orations, history, and poetry in such a manner, as makes them appear to have been his only study.

I have been the more particular in this account, that you might the better know how many excellencies, and what agreeable qualifications centered in this one servant. The man has been long dear to me, and my tenderness of him has been increased by his present ill state of health. For nature has so formed us, that nothing excites and quickens our affection so much, as the fear of losing the object; a fear which I have suffered oftner than once on his account. It

^a Iliad, Book 24. v. 770.

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

is now some years since he was pronouncing a speech with great vehemence and earnestness, when he spit blood, and, upon that account, being sent by me into *Egypt*, after a long stay in that country, he returned lately in a confirmed state of health: since which, as he has exercised his voice for many days together, he was threatened with his old infirmity by a little cough, and afterwards again spit blood. For which reason I am determined to send him to your estate in *Forojulium*, having often heard you say, that the air there was healthy, and the milk particularly prevalent in curing disorders of this kind. I entreat you therefore to write to your people, to furnish him with a lodging, and accommodate him with whatever else he shall want. He will want but little; for he is so sparing and abstemious, that he not only refrains from niceties, but even from things necessary for his health. I shall take care to provide him with money, sufficient for a man of his temperance, and who is going to your house. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

The quotation from HOMER in this epistle, $\omega\alpha\lambda\eta\eta\delta\epsilon\ \omega\varsigma\ \xi\pi\iota\omicron\varsigma\ \xi\epsilon\nu$, is part of HELEN'S speech, upon the sight of HECTOR'S body, brought back by PRIAM from the tent of ACHILLES. The whole speech is one of the most masterly strokes of HOMER'S pen. It is the conclusion of his poem, and leaves us with the highest impressions of HECTOR'S humanity, and the tenderest compassion for HELEN'S infirmities, that can possibly be felt. PLINY, in many of his letters, seems remarkably fond of quoting HOMER, and the ancient writers. If, in his time, the works of antiquity were so valuable, and so very agreeable to men of genius, and refined literature; the later ages have the additional advantage of numerous authors, who were contemporaries, and successors to PLINY, and who are become antients to us. In familiar letters, classical quotations, properly introduced, are ornaments that add elegance and vivacity to the style, and often

often convey ideas, which could not be so fully expressed in any other manner.

Search the great antients, and you'll wisely find,
 Those are the truest mirrors of the mind :
 In them appears unfulled nature's face,
 And common sense, with more than common grace.

The character of ZOSIMUS in this epistle, and the manner of introducing it, shew the excellence of the servant, and the benevolence of the master. One of the commentators tells us, the name of ZOSIMUS is still extant at *Comum*. His words are, *ejus memoria adhuc Comi extat in templo divi ANDREÆ tribus verbis notata; ZOSIMUS CONJUGI INCOMPARABILI* : " There is extant in the temple of St. ANDREW at *Comum* an inscription to perpetuate her memory, in three words only; ZOSIMUS TO HIS INCOMPARABLE WIFE." This is the epitaph, which ZOSIMUS composed in honour of his wife. And although it contains only three words, two of which have no relation to her character, yet the third carries in it so extensive a meaning, and leaves us to conclude so many excellencies, that ZOSIMUS himself must have found it impossible to have made the least addition in her praise. The antients are peculiarly happy in their mottos, their epitaphs, and their inscriptions. The moderns seem to think, that the whole art, and beauty, of those kind of writings, consist entirely in their length. But the preference may at once be decided, when three words can contain a finer panegyric, than the longest epitaph in *Westminster* abbey.

Et quasi inscriptio, comædus. By the word *inscriptio*, PLINY alludes to the custom of exposing slaves to sale, with writings in their hands, enumerating the several performances and accomplishments in which they excelled. And the allusion is the more proper towards ZOSIMUS, as he was PLINY's freed-man. But although ZOSIMUS is particularly distinguished as *comædus*, he must not be looked upon as a public, and professed comedian. The Romans entertained themselves in the evening by seeing plays acted, during the time they were at supper. Thus PLINY, in the fifteenth epistle of the first book, says to SEPTICIUS CLARUS, who had promised to sup with him, " You would have heard a

PLINY'S EPISTLES.

“comedy”. But there was a species of comedy often acted at the several houses of men of rank, and figure, different from those representations, which went under the general denomination of *Comœdia*. It was a kind of farce, and was called *Atellana*^b, from *Atella*, a town of *Campania*, where it was first invented: the chief design of it was mirth and ridicule, not unmixed with satir, upon particular persons; and sometimes an introduction of great wantonness and debauchery. In these diversions the servants, such of them as had capacity sufficient for the occasion, were joined with the other actors, and had their particular parts assigned to them. *ZOSIMUS*, according to *PLINY*, excelled in this comic mimicry; a talent, which is often born with a man, and, where it is not, can seldom be assumed with success.

In prædia tua, quæ Foro-julii possides. The *Forum-julium* here mentioned, is at present the *patria* of *Friuli*, which surrendered to *ALBINUS*, King of *Lombardy*, in the year of the Christian æra, five hundred and sixty eight. He erected the territory into a dukedom, and bestowed it upon his nephew *GISULPHUS*^c. The most part of it now belongs to the *Venetians*, the rest to the emperor. Although this is the most northern part of *Italy*, it is particularly remarkable for vines and delicate fruits; which shew the climate to be mild and salutary; otherwise, it must have been an improper residence for *ZOSIMUS*, whose complaints seem to threaten an immediate decay.

^a The expression is *audisses comædos*, which rendered literally, is, “You might have heard the players.” I imagine the *comædi* here mentioned, were the *Atellanici*, if we may so call them, who differed from the *Histriones*, or common players; they might enlist themselves into the army, a privilege, which was not allowed to the *Histriones*; and was granted only to freemen of *Rome*.

^b *Monsieur DACIER*'s note, upon the 225th verse of *HORACE*'s art of poetry, is a very full explanation of the *Atellana*. Vide *SUETON. TIBERII*, cap. XLV. and *JUVENAL*, Sat. VI. p. 71.

^c *TACITUS* speaks of *Friuli*, as a very ancient and illustrious colony. He says it was the country, in which his father-in-law *AGRICOLA* was born. *CNÆUS JULIUS AGRICOLÆ veteri et illustri Foro-julienfium colonia ortus.*

Life of *AGRICOLA* by *TACITUS*.

EPISTLE XX.

PLINY to URSUS.

THE *Bitbynians*, in a short time after their accusation of JULIUS BASSUS, began another prosecution against RUFUS VARENUS, their proconsul; the same VARENUS, whom they had lately desired, and retained, as their advocate against BASSUS. When they were introduced into the senate, they required leave to prove their charge; and then VARENUS requested, that he might have liberty to summon witnesses in defence of his cause. This was opposed by the *Bitbynians*, and the matter came to a debate. I pleaded for VARENUS, not without success; but whether well, or ill, the book, which contains my pleadings, will shew. For, in pleadings, chance has a great sway over each party: memory, voice, gesture, time itself, in a word, either the love, or hatred, of the accused, all contribute both to depreciate, and recommend, the respective pleadings: but, when those pleadings appear in a book, they then give no offence, they gain no partiality, nor are subject to other incidents, be those incidents prosperous, or not. FONTEIUS MAGIUS, one of the *Bitbynians*, answered me, with many words, and little matter. It is a received custom among most of the *Greeks*, that volubility of speech supplies the want of substance; so tedious, and such insipid sentences do they amass together in one breath, as it were in a torrent. And therefore JULIUS CANDIDUS used to say, in his polite manner, *eloquence was one thing, and loquacity another*. For eloquence has scarce ever fallen to the share of above one, or two men; nay, if you will believe MARCUS ANTONIUS, it never was attained by any man: but what CANDIDUS calls loquacity, has been the peculiar gift of many, and especially

cially of those, who had most impudence. The next day HOMULUS pleaded for VARENUS with great address, force, and elegance; to whom NIGRINUS replied in a concise manner, but with weight and dignity. ACILIUS RUFUS, consul elect, was of opinion, that the *Bitbynians* should have liberty to prove their charge: he passed by the request of VARENUS in silence. This was a more polite manner of giving his negative to it. CORNELIUS PRISCUS, who had been consul, was for granting the requests both of the accusers, and the accused; and the majority of the senate were with him.

We have obtained our point, though not authorized by any law or custom; yet just in itself. Why it is just, I shall not explain in a letter, in order to your desiring the whole pleading. For, if the saying of HOMER be true,

That novel lays attract our ravish'd ears;
But old the mind with inattention hears †:

then must I take particular care, in this address to you, that my speech does not lose the grace of novelty, (in which its chief merit will consist) by the impertinence and length of my letter. Adieu.

OBSERVATIONS.

The limits, and the execution, of the Roman laws, were equally uncertain under most of the emperors. From the time of AUGUSTUS, to the reigns of NERVA and TRAJAN, justice and all legal authority were set aside, vice presided, and virtue was depressed. In the reign of TRAJAN, equity and uprightnes were again revived. The humanity of that emperor was particularly remarkable in redressing grievances, and punishing guilt.

VARENUS *petit, ut evocare testes liceret*: “VARENUS asked, that he might have liberty to cite witnesses.” All

† POPE'S Odyss. Book I. v. 446.

civil law courts, at this day, use citations to compel witnesses to appear. And therefore we may explain this sentence, as a petition from VARENUS, that he might have some legal process, or summons, from the judges, to compel the witnesses to attend, and give their testimony, on the day appointed by the court. This method, at least, is agreeable to what is practised by the English laws. In the courts of *Westminster-hall*, we have subpoenas to compel the witnesses to appear: and in trials before the privy council, the witnesses receive a summons from the clerk of the council, which if they disobey, they are liable to be punished according to the nature of the case. And this was probably the method among the Romans; otherwise, it must have been fruitless to ascertain a time for producing witnesses, and yet to allow no power to compel those witnesses to appear. An expression, in the ninth epistle of PLINY's third book, seems to confirm this opinion. The words are, *et testibus quidam, sine iratus, quod evocatus esset invitus, &c.* "One of the witnesses came with regret, perhaps because he was summoned." The *testis invitus*, in all probability would never have been present, had it not been penal to stay away.

PLINY, in this epistle, displays the many advantages, which a graceful orator possesses, over a less accomplished speaker; and observes, what impressions such advantages are apt to make upon the judges: but adds, that when the several arguments are reduced into writing, all these advantages are removed, and the reader is left to an unbiassed judgement. *Liber offensis, liber gratia caret*: "Written sentiments are equally indifferent to censure or favour." Eloquence and oratory were looked upon as such superlative sciences among the Romans, that they were often more attended to, than the real merits of the cause.

The distinction between eloquence and loquacity quoted from JULIUS CANDIDUS, is certainly just. The one required an eminent degree of genius and abilities; nor was it attainable without great pains and art. The other required only impudence, and strength of lungs. Many instances are daily to be seen of the latter, but very few of the former.

There are four other epistles in PLINY, which relate to VARENUS; the fifth and the thirteenth of the sixth book; the sixth and the tenth of the seventh book.

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EPISTLE XXI.

PLINY to CANINIUS RUFUS.

I Went into the *Julian* court of justice, to hear those lawyers, to whom I was to make reply according to the last adjournment of the cause. The judges sat, the centumviri came, all eyes were fixed upon the advocates : a long silence ensued ; at last a messenger arrived from the prætor. The centumviri are at once dismissed ; the day is put off ; all to my great joy, who am never so sufficiently prepared, as not to be glad of a delay. NEPOS the prætor, by closely adhering to the letter of the law, occasioned the adjournment. He had published a short edict, in which he gave notice both to the accusers, and the accused, that he would strictly put in execution the decree of senate. To his edict he affixed the decree itself, by which it was ordered, “ *that all persons, who had any cause whatever to plead, should swear before their cause came on, that they had given nothing, had promised nothing, had secured nothing, to the advocate, who was to plead their cause.*” By these words, and many others, the advocates are forbidden to take fees, or the parties to offer any. But, when the law-suit is ended, the parties are permitted to give their advocates ten thousand * nummi, but no more. The prætor, who presides over the court of centumviri, being embarrassed by this decree of NEPOS, took time to deliberate, whether he should follow his example. His deliberation gave us a respite, which we did not expect. In the mean time the edict of NEPOS is blamed, or praised, according to men’s different ways of thinking, throughout the

* Equal to ten sesterces : in English money, 80*l.* 14*s.* 7*d.*

whole city. Many say, "We have a man, who will set all things right. How? Have we never had any prætors before him? Who is this mighty reformer of the public manners? Others, on the contrary, say, "He has done right in beginning his magistracy in this manner: he has enforced the laws: he has kept to the letter of senatorial decrees: he has abolished a most infamous commerce; and will not suffer the noblest profession to be thus prostituted, and become venal." These are the sentiments of both sides; and which party will prevail, we shall see by the event. It is certain, nothing is less equitable, yet more common, than to see honest, or corrupt counsels, approved of, or condemned, according as they fail, or prosper. From hence it often happens, that the same actions take different denominations, sometimes of zeal, sometimes of vanity, sometimes of liberty, and sometimes of madness. Farewell.

OBSERVATIONS.

This epistle gives us an insight into a very excellent law, that ought to be adopted by all civilized nations in the world. And PLINY at the same time glances, with great discretion and tenderness, at that universal corruption, which in time not only destroyed the empire, but extirpated the very name and language of the Roman people.

Descenderam in Juliam Basilicam: "I went down into the court of Julia." The *Basilicæ* are explained to us by ROSINUS^a. *Erant Basilicæ amplissima et ornatissima ædificia, in quibus, non senatores modò deliberare, verum etiam iudices omnis generis causas cognoscere, et clientibus homines periti de jure respondere solebant: quando hi vacabant, mercatores ibidem et nummularii sua tractabant negotia.* From hence we learn, that the *Basilicæ* were beautiful and spacious edifices, adapted at once to the courts of justice, and to mercantile negotiations. ^b VITRUVIUS tells us, that they ought always to be built in the warmest part of the town,

^a Lib. 9. cap. 7.

^b Lib. 5. cap. 1.

near the forum, and in such a situation, as is best defended from storms and bad weather. His words are, *Basilicarum loca adjuncta foris, quam calidissimis partibus oportet constitui, ut per hyemem sine molestia tempestatum se conferre in eas negotiatores possint.* VOSSIUS observes, that they were generally built oblong like a ship, and so near the shape of our Christian churches, that, in the early ages of Christianity, churches were frequently raised upon the old foundation of the *Basilicæ*. By the word *descenderam*, we may imagine, that the court of *Julia* was placed lower than the other three courts of the *centumviri*, all which were appointed for judging of such matters, as the prætor committed to their decision. We are told by two lines, which some attribute to LUCAN, others to OVID, that a spear was the ensign of their authority, and was erected when the *decemviri* and *centumviri flitibus judicandis*^c were sitting in judicature.

*Seu trepidos ad jura decem citat hasta virorum,
Seu firmare jubet centeno judice causam :*

“ Thither the guilty, summon'd by the spear,
“ Ensign of pow'r, before those courts appear :
“ Where causes by the ten great chiefs are tried,
“ Or by the nobler hundred ratified.”

Ceremonies, that were so perfectly established, and so frequently put in practice, were too notorious to be mentioned in a letter; otherwise PLINY would probably have taken notice of the spear, which was also made use of at all public and private auctions, and gave rise to the proverb, *sub hasta vendi*.

All laws were originally founded on justice, wisdom and candour: They are strictly adhered to, and rigorously executed, in the first settlement of state. And while such a due observance of equity and uprightness is maintained, the magistrates preserve their just power, and the people their just freedom. But time and prosperity produce indolence, avarice, and numberless other evils, which undermine the foundations of justice, and by degrees bring the superstructure to the ground. In our author's days the Roman govern-

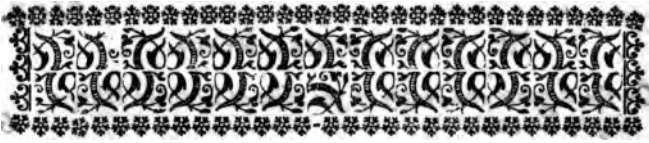
^c The *decemviri flitibus judicandis* are explained in the observations on the 2d epistle of book 6.

ment was mouldering into decay : and although NEPOS, and other particular persons, even TRAJAN himself, endeavoured to revive the antient virtue, and to recover the antient constitution ; yet all those endeavours were without success ; or, at most, were only lightnings before death : for corruption, in whatever kingdom she has an opportunity to establish herself, never quits her situation, till, like the plague, she leaves not the traces of humanity behind her.

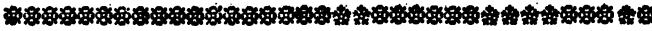
The End of the FIFTH BOOK.







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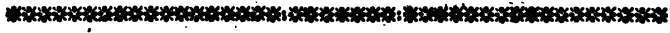
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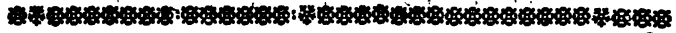
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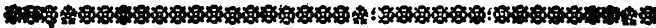
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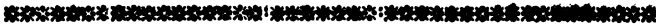
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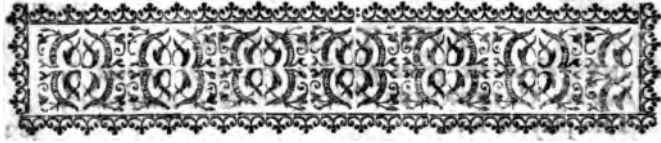
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